

SNAPS

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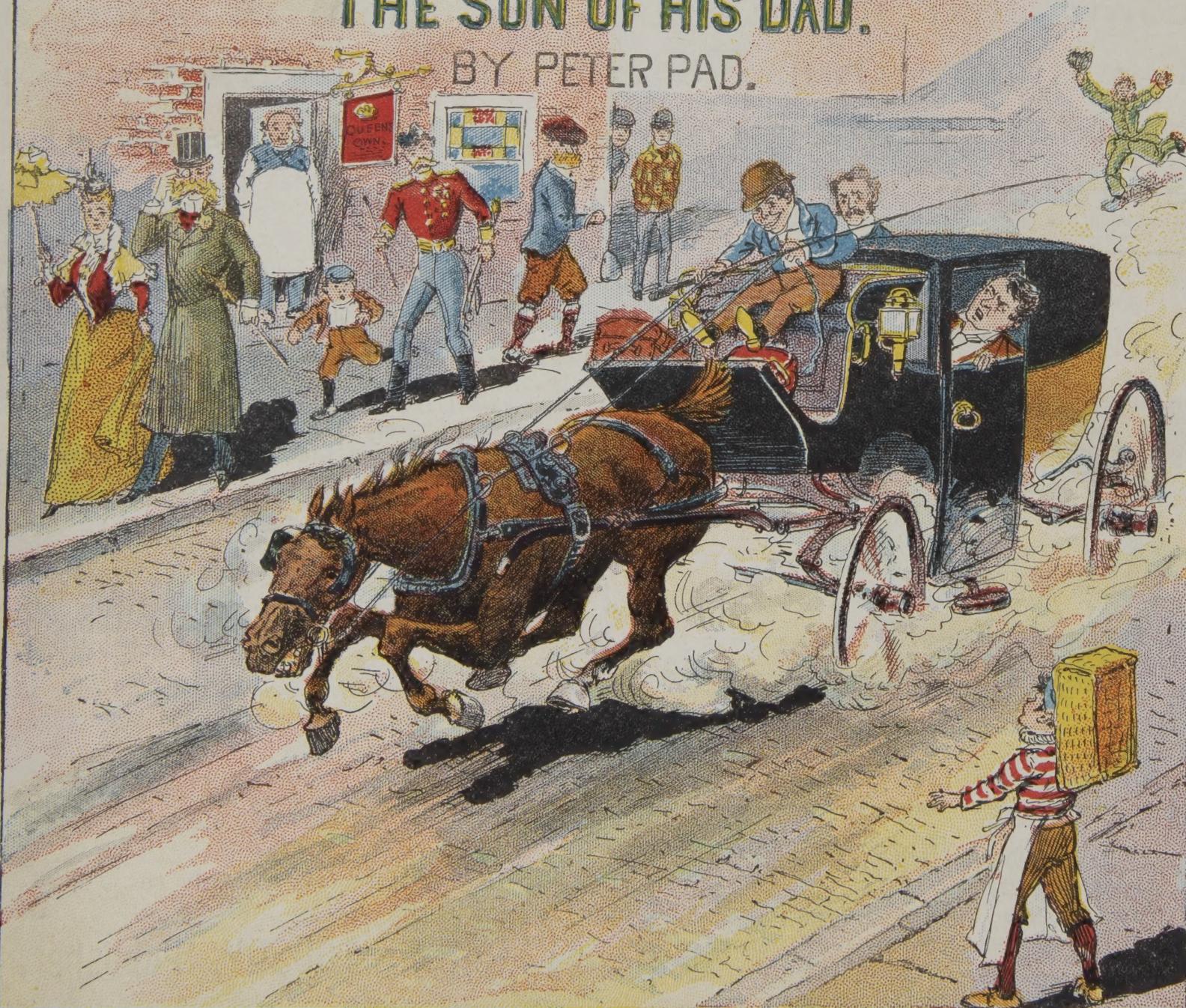
No. 45.

NEW YORK, AUGUST 15, 1900.

Price 5 Cents.

SHORTY JUNIOR; OR, THE SON OF HIS DAD.

BY PETER PAD.



"Wonder what kind of a cabby I'd mak'?" said the kid, picking up the reins and whipping the old horse off into his best and liveliest gait. "Hi, 'ol' hon there!" shouted the Jehu. "I'll see yer later," called back the kid.

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CHAPTER I.

The readers of THE TWO SHORTYS will remember that we left our friends Shorty Junior, Shorty and Shanks at the Fifth Avenue Hotel, taking leave of their old chums in the New York Minstrel Troupe on its breaking up.

"Well, dad, what's yer lay-out for ter-day?" inquired Shorty Junior the next morning, as they were sitting in the smoking-room.

"Whew! Don't chin me. Shanks and I've got more t'ings ter 'tend ter dan yer could shake a stick at," replied his dad. "An' what's yer racket, Chips? I 'spect yer'll be up ter yer ears in mischief 'fore I'm out of sight."

"Don't yer fret yer insides inter fiddle-strings 'bout dis gosling, for 'fi can't paddle my own canoe roun' dese diggin's, I dunno wher' yer goin' ter scare up 'em dat can," said the kid.

"Oh, I ain't 'fraid of yer holdin' yer own only I wanted ter kno' wher' I'd pick yer up."

"Gess yer'll find me at Coney Island," replied the kid.

"Coney Island, by jingo!" exclaimed Shorty.

"Coney Island, by hokey!" cried Shanks.

"Let's get a buggy an' go down; hang der biz; let it flop ober

till ter-morrer," proposed Shorty, enthusiastically.

"I'm with you, pard, like a Siamese twin," said Shanks, who was always ready to take a hand in any fun that was going.

"Den it's Coney Island on der half shell for three," laughed Shorty.

"Bully boys wid a glass eye!" shouted the kid, jumping up and clapping on his hat. "Now yer fellers put a mustard plaster on

der back of yer necks ter help yer ter draw on dose cigars while I slide roun' ter der stable wher' Buster's kept, an' I'll make der boss send yer roun' der sniftiest pair of pelters dat he's got, or I'll make t'ings howl."

Half an hour later Shorty and Shanks took their seats behind a spanking team, which had been sent up from the stable, and started off, Shorty Junior, mounted on Buster, cantering gaily alongside, and creating quite a sensation by his diminutive size and the manner in which he rode and curbed his prancing steed, who sniffed the air and tossed his head at the strange sights of the metropolis.

"Golly, fellers! Ain't dat a hummin' black nag dat little rat's on?" exclaimed a newsboy, as Shorty Junior rode on board of a Fulton ferryboat.

"He's skittish, ain't he?"

"Yer bet yer boots, bub, dat he is," answered the kid. "Hey! Look out dere, ma'am," he shouted, as he saw a fat, red-faced woman, with a big basket of pop-corn, peanuts and candies, standing suspiciously close to Buster's heels.

"Bad cess to him for a black nagur of a horse. I'd loike to see him be afther kickin' Mrs.—"

The balance of her remarks were lost to posterity, owing to Buster at that moment, suddenly and spasmodically straightening out his left hind leg, and the next moment the air was full of peanuts, pop-corn, bolivars, and a sprawling, shrieking, scolding woman.

The deckhands picked her up, straightened her bustle, led her into the cabin, dumped her into a seat, and hurried out to rescue what the newsboys hadn't sniped up of her stock in trade.

The ferryboat was about in the center of the river when a wheezing, puffing little tug steamed alongside and suddenly blew a shrill, ear-splitting whistle.

Buster, who had been trembling and starting at every strange sound, no sooner heard it than he tossed up his head, seized the bit in his teeth, and with a wild snort of terror sprang forward among the affrighted passengers, cleared the side rail with a magnificent leap and disappeared in the river.

"Stop the boat!"

"Boy and horse overboard!"

"Where is he?"

"Save him, somebody! Save him!"

"He's gone to the bottom!"

"Back the engine!"

"Lower a boat, quick!" yelled the passengers, as they crowded to the side, pale with terror.

"Just stan' back dere for a second an' give his ole man half a show, will yer, an' I'll fetch 'im up from der bottom 'fi 'ave ter swim under der water ter Harlem!" exclaimed Shorty, who with Shanks had sprung from their buggy and were divesting themselves of their coats and boots.

"There he is!"

"Hurrah, hurrah!"

"Bully for the little fellow!"

"See how he sticks to him!" shouted the crowd, as the mustang came to the surface with Shorty Junior, sticking to his back as if he was part of him.

"Throw him over a life preserver!"

"Hurry up with them boats for heaven's sake!"

"Oh, Crickey, ain't he jest a game 'un; see he's a grinnin' at us!"

"Keep your reins slack an' giv' 'im his head, Chips, my boy!" yelled Shorty, rushing over to the side.

"Oh, I'se all hunk, dad, go on wid yer boat an' neber mind Buster nor me!" shouted the kid back cheerily, as he shook the water from his face and headed his steed for the Brooklyn side, where ropes were lowered and with the assistance of a derrick both horse and rider were safely landed and received the hearty congratulations of the crowd.

"Say, Chips, 'f yer wanted ter tak' a bath why didn't yer wait till yer got down ter der Island?" said Shorty, as he patted his youngster on the head kindly.

"Der ferry company ort ter giv' me ha'f my fare back 'cause I only com' part der way on der boat," laughed Shorty Junior.

"Now, den, let's hunt up a hat an' some dry duds. How's Buster, all right?" inquired his paternal.

"Rip stavin', pop."

"We'll bounce 'im agin, and let's kite along."

At the first clothing store they struck, Shorty Junior exchanged his wet clothes for a dry suit, and mounting Buster, they started off again.

"Jimminy, dad! What a bustin' ol' place dis is ter give Buster

a spin," exclaimed the kid, as they struck one of the wooden pavement streets leading to Prospect Park.

"Der mounted cops'd spin yer inter der jug 'f yer tried it," said his dad.

"I'd like ter see der cop dat's got a nag dat'll catch Buster. 'Tany rate I'm goin' ter let him bile 'long for a lark," laughed Shorty Junior, and without a word the mustang sprang forward in his long, sweeping gallop that covered the ground so quickly.

"Hey, there; stop that horse!" yelled a hoarse voice, as he was dashing along through the second block.

"Stop 'm yerself 'f yer want 'im stopped, ol' hoss peeler!" replied the kid, dashing straight ahead without drawing rein.

"I'll do that soon enough, and give you a little taste of the station house for your sass!" exclaimed the policeman, placing his horse across the street and making ready to snatch at the flying steed.

"Give yer granny a taste of it!" shouted Shorty Junior, and tightening his reins, he allowed Buster to dash within a few feet of the policeman, then just as the officer was in the act of snatching at his bridle, he reined him up on his haunches, wheeled him to the left and went whirling away, leaving the dazed and enraged cop swearing and fuming as he started in mad pursuit.

"Hold on there or I'll fire!" shrieked the cop, as he spurred his old plug along the patent pavement.

"Bang away, old slouch, 'f yer pistol ain't any better dan yer hoss yer won't hurt nobody, ta-ta, da-da, by-by!" said the kid, turning around and treating the policeman to a sarcastic grin.

Buster was widening the distance between himself and his pursuer at every leap, and Shorty Junior was congratulating himself upon how easily he had outwitted the cop, when raising his eyes he saw not half a block in front, the sergeant of the squad, who was making his daily rounds.

"Crickeylumbus! But dis is goin' ter be 'bout as tite a trap 'si want ter get inter!" muttered the kid, as he saw the sergeant back a coal cart across the street and take his place in front of it, thus completely blocking the street.

"Stop that horse, boy!" ordered the sergeant.

"Stop nuthin'! Go lay down!" exclaimed Shorty Junior; then leaning forward he patted Butster's neck, and whispered: "Now, ol' boy, do yer purtiest for I'se goin' ter giv' yer a jump dat'll mak' dese fellers' hair stan' on end."

"Halt, I command you!" screamed the sergeant.

"Command till yer tired, an' see how much good it'll do yer!" shouted Shorty Junior, and as he spoke, with a shout to Buster, he touched him lightly with the spurs, and the gallant steed, with a glorious leap, cleared the back of the coal cart horse, and sped along, leaving the sergeant sitting open-mouthed and dumfounded.

After galloping a few blocks further till he felt sure he was out of danger of pursuit, Shorty Junior reined in Buster and allowed him to walk quietly along till Shorty and Shanks overtook him.

"Whoa, Buster, what's der matter wid yer, ol' feller?" exclaimed the kid, as the merry jingling of musical bells ahead of them caused the mustang to prick up his ears and prance.

"Talk 'bout yer talk-'bouts, but I can jest sit up an' sing ter yer, pard, dat dat ain't no slouch of a turn out," remarked Shorty, as they passed a stage drawn by ten black horses, and filled with a laughing, pleasure-seeking party of ladies and gentlemen.

"Bells on the horses and belles inside," said Shanks.

"Cheese it, chum, dem ain't actors 'f dey are on der stage," coddled Shorty.

"Hush, dad, or I'll hav' ter get off an' fan yer both wid a fence rail," jibed the kid.

"Oh, when it comes to fencing er railing, I'll pipe down," laughed Shanks.

"An' yer can blow out my candle wid a hummin' bird's breath," said Shorty.

Reaching the Island they stabled and tabled at Cable's, and then started off for a visit to the beach.

"Now, den, for der second splash ter day," said Chips, as he darted off with a short pair of children's bathing tights under his arm.

"Mebbe dis ain't a reg'lar ol' shampoo wash," remarked Shorty, some quarter of an hour later, as they were bobbing, ducking and buffeting with the white-crested breakers.

"Beats a Russian plunge, a Turkish bath, and a French cocktail all to smithereens," gasped Shanks, crawling out from under an immense breaker and spitting out a mouthful of sand and water.

"Dig yer toes inter der sand an' hol' on till I show yer a racket," said the kid, who appeared to be as much at home in water as an eel.

"Look out, Chips, an' don't get tumbled ter," warned his paternal.

"I'll put you in the Aquarium along with the other monkeys, if you put up any job on me," threatened Shanks.

"Ain't yer hollerin' 'fore yer hurt? Dip under, wash der sand outer yer teeth an' keep yer head damp for I ain't goin' sour on yer," grinned the young imp, diving under the water and swimming rapidly toward where a corpulent and bald-headed German was bathing his family.

"Yaw, yaw; dish ish petter ash lager beer—mein Gott in himmel! Vot ish dot?" he exclaimed, as Shorty Junior, swimming by under the water, jabbed him with a pin in the calf of the leg.

His wife and family gathered around him and finally got him quieted down, and he was just spitting out salt water and broken English when the kid dove once more under the surface and prodded him in the back.

"Dundervetter! Dose dings make me droubles. I dinks id ish von of dose dings dey call scrabs," shouted the Dutchman, letting go his hold on the rope and springing wildly up out of the water.

He was gazing around with a pained expression of countenance, when an immense white cap came surging along, struck him fair between the shoulders, and a second later, he was fishing on the bottom with his nose, and pointing up to the sky with his sandy feet, while Shorty, Shanks and the kid, fairly shook themselves with laughter.

"Now, gov, watch me spill der frou," said the kid, a few moments later, when everything was once more lovely, and diving, he glided over, caught her by the ankle and upset her headfirst into her corpulent husband's bread basket, causing that individual to let go and howl like mad.

"Der duyvel, Katrina! You ish shust so pad as dose pig piles of vader; vot for you dink mein stomach ish made mid?" he roared.

"Oh, dose scrabs! Dose scrabs! Dose scrabs!" screamed the woman, when she had been fished up and the water poured out of her, sufficient to let her explain her extraordinary behavior.

The next moment the kid snatched one of the tow-headed youngsters by the leg and dragged him under, just as the astonished Teuton was about to lift him up in his arms.

"Py shimmey! Dot peats der duyvel!" he exclaimed, as he watched his youngster disappear under the water with a frightened squall.

A few minutes later, when the child reappeared on the top of the wave, his excited paternal seized him by the legs and held him upside down till the salt water had run out of him, and he was able to sob forth:

"Scrabs! Scrabs—pig scrabs!"

"Dot seddles dis pathing pizness, und I go ride out mid der water," said the father, determinedly.

"Hold on, Dutchy, an' hav' some more fun," said Shorty, who was roaring with laughter.

"Dot ish nix fun. You dink I ish ein shackass, ter let der scrabs eat breakfast mit mein legs?" he answered, excitedly, as he gathered his family around him.

"Dere ain't any crabs 'ere," said Shorty, reassuringly.

"Mein frendt, dot ish ein poss lie; dey pite. Gott in himmel! More scrabs!" he shrieked, as Shorty Junior gave him a couple of sly prods in the rear, and with a wild yell of terror he rushed for the shore, where he explained his troubles and experience to a laughing, coddling crowd.

After enjoying themselves to their hearts' content in the water, our party came ashore and after dressing themselves, proceeded to scoop in all that was worth seeing on the island.

Visiting the Aquarium, they at once made for the tank containing the white whales, and stood gaping in.

"I'd like to get a good, square look at one of them whales," said a farmer, approaching the tank.

"Would yer? Den I'll help yer. D'yer see dat feller over dere wid der gig lamps on his snoot, stoopin' down an' lookin' in der water?" asked Shorty Junior, pointing over to the other side of the tank, where a dandy exquisite was staring through a pair of eyeglasses at the whales.

"Wal, neow I kalkilate as how I do," said the farmer.

"F yer skin roun' dere, stan' clus behind 'im, an' peek over his shoulder, ye'll see dem fish same as yer wer' a double-barreled telescope," advised the kid, leading him around.

"Much 'bliged, boy; if I'd fotched along an apple, I'd give you a bite," said the countryman, and he crept softly up and standing close behind the young fop, peered with straining eyeballs over his shoulder.

"Red hot, an' still a heatin', ain't dey?" asked the kid, coming up behind them.

"What is red hot, urchin?" demanded the fop.

"Yer are, an' I'm goin' ter cool yer off wid a bath!" shouted the mischievous imp, as he gave the farmer a shove; the latter stumbled, grabbed at, and finally shoved the dandy headfirst into the tank, amid the shouts of laughter of every one present.

"H-h-h-e-l-p! I-I'll be dr-dr-drowned an-and eaten up b-b-by th-the wh-whales!" he sputtered, as he caught hold of the side of the tank, and held on.

"Mister, is der water wet?" asked the kid, with a comical grin.

"Oh, p-pull me out, som-somebody!" gasped the dandy.

The countryman reached for his coat-collar, and was hauling him out, when Shorty Junior suddenly yelled:

"Look out! Look out! Dere he's a-comin' for yer lik' a streak of lightnin'!"

"Oh! Oh! Save me! Save me!" shrieked the terrified dandy, and throwing his arms wildly around the neck of the farmer, he caused the latter to lose his balance, and the next moment they were both kicking and splurging around in the tank, to the great astonishment of the whales, and the infinite amusement of all the spectators.

Two of the assistants fished them out and they stood dripping and glaring at each other, each believing and blaming the other as the author of his misfortunes.

After strolling around the building, looking at the monkeys and laughing till they were sore over this last racket, our party started back to Cable's Hotel for some dinner.

"Say, boss, can I send a message by yer ter Europe?" inquired Shorty of the gentlemanly proprietor.

"But I'm not going to Europe, my dear sir," answered the other.

"Ain't goin' ter Europe? Why, I thort yer was der genuine Atlantic Cable," said Shorty, wittily, and there was a general smile all around, while the proprietor whispered:

"What'll you take, gentleman?"

After stowing a square sea-shore meal under their vests, our party ordered their plugs brought out, and returned to the city, well pleased with their day's frolic.

That evening Shorty and Shanks had a long consultation in one of their rooms, at the conclusion of which, the kid coming in, Shorty said:

"Say, Chips, Shanks an' I are t'inking 'bout goin' outer der burnt cork biz. I don't much keer 'bout bumpin' myself roun' like I used ter. How'd yer like ter run a company an' be der boss star?"

"Nigger show?" queried the kid.

"Yee-up."

"I'll tell yer what I'd like ter do wid yer, dad?"

"Spit it out, Chips."

"Well, yer and Shanks have made dead loads of stamps, I bet, on dat last hurrah trip of yern. Now, 'f yer'd jest flounce 'em out, buy me up der snortinest, hang up circus dat's ter be had, snatch der best riders, der nobbiest hosses, an' everything snifty, an' den tack on a fast, top row minstrel troupe 'long wid 'em, we could make t'ings get up an' crawl," explained the kid.

"By George! That's a ripping good idea of the boy's; it would take like smoke," exclaimed Shanks.

"But how'd yer run such a swell turn-out as all dat?" inquired his paternal.

"Oh, yer an' Shanks 'll come 'long wid a feller an' do der managin' biz; yer didn't want me ter rush der buck alone, did yer?"

"I'm half in for the idea," said Shanks.

"Tain't a slouch of a get up, but it's goin' ter tak' a stack of suger ter start der machine runnin' rite," said Shorty.

"I'll stake the kid for one-half der racket," said Shanks, generously.

"Well, den, I s'pose I'll have ter put up der oder ha'f or shut up. So, kid, yer can count on havin' jest der hunky-doryest, highflyin' show dat ever pulled out of dis town if it makes der ole man's pocketbook look's if an elephant had come down on it wid his number 'leventeen hoof," said Shorty.

"Tanks, dad; an' Shanks, an' 'fi don't make t'ings hum once'd we get started, den yer can stew me up for sauce, for dere was allers lots of it in me."

"Dat settles it, den. Shanks an' I'll spin 'roun on our eyebrows an' scoop in eberyting of der best. We don't want nothing slouch in der shows. Eberyting's got ter be of der humminist top crust ter be had," remarked Shorty.

"An' yer an' Shanks'll com' 'long an' fire up der whole biz," asked Shorty Junior.

"Yes, yes, I suppose so, Chips."

"K'rect, den, I'm yer huckleberry in milk, an' all yer'll hav' ter do is ter stan' back an' watch me snake dem oder shows inter der background," laughed the kid, climbing down from the back of the sofa and offering his little paw to his dad and Shanks for a shake.

"Is dat what yer call a bargain-bindin' shake?" asked Shorty, laughing.

"Yer bet, dat's jest 'bout der size of dat grip," replied his son.

"Den yer t'ink, Chips, dat yer'd like ter run a gang of nigger minstrels 'long wid der circus?" asked Shorty.

"Well, I'll skip roun', pop, an' 'fi can pick up some' of der bosses at der biz I'll freeze on ter dem. Dis ort ter be a bustin' ol' time of der year ter pick up a hunky team. Yer kno' dey'er all on der lay-off just now."

"Good enough, den ter-morrer we'll commence biz, an' 'f we don't make Barnum look cheap yer can set me up on Coney Island for a target to chuck balls at," grinned Shorty, and they parted shortly afterward.

CHAPTER II.

"I guess that fun will have to creep out through the keyhole and let bustling old biz shake himself loose to-day," remarked Shanks, at the breakfast table the next morning.

"Som'how or oder I can allers find time ter squeeze in a racket if I get ha'f a show," said Shorty Junior as he slyly dropped a soft-boiled egg into Shanks' coat-tail pocket.

"Dat used ter be my best grip, but I s'pect, Chips, dat we've all got ter be on der get up an' crawl lay till dis circus agony's 'tended ter," answered his dad.

"Mutton-headed Beelzebub! What in suffering creation is that?" exclaimed Shanks, as in reaching for his pocket handkerchief he mashed the egg and brought out five yellow, sticky fingers.

"Looks 's if yer'd been robbin' a henroost," grinned Shorty Junior.

"Been paintin' yerself yaller. Goin' ter start in der Chinaman bizness?" laughed Shorty.

"I'd like to paint the snoozer's eyes black and blue that put the egg there!" shouted Shanks, turning his pocket inside out and glaring very savagely at the waiter.

"Egg-zactly so," coddled the kid.

"Shell out, Shanks," joked Shorty.

"I'd like to explode a torpedo shell over somebody's ear," said Shanks, grimly, as he wiped his pocket dry with a napkin.

"Say Chips, how 'bout yer tent?" asked Shorty.

"Les' hav' der tent red, white an' blue, one strip of der canvas red, one white, an' one blue, an' hav' it big huff ter knock der spots out of anything dat trabels," replied the kid, as he shook some red pepper into a pet poodle's mouth who had slipped away from a lady and was setting up on his hind legs begging.

Then followed a scene of the wildest excitement; the dog howled and flew around the room like mad, ladies screamed, men cursed and hoisted up their legs, waiters kicked and fell over him, breaking their shins and dishes they were carrying.

"Mad dog!" yelled the kid, stuffing a napkin into his mouth to keep from roaring out with laughter.

"Here, Prince! Why, he don't even know his mistress!" screamed a lady, as the kid flew past her with his mouth wide open, his eyes bulging out and his tail sticking out like a rudder.

"Mad dog!" sang out the waiters, and there was a general stampede for the door, during which things got hopelessly mixed; tables, children and chairs were upset and stumbled over, men swore, trod on women's dresses, and kicked at the snapping cur, who had got jammed up in the throng; women screamed, fainted and clawed each other's back hair, children yelled, fought, fell down and were stepped on, and the poodle, kicked, cuffed, banged and thrashed, snapped right and left.

"Two ter one on der pup and no takers!" shouted Shorty Junior.

"Great Mahomet, I'm bit! I'm bit!" yelled an old man, dancing around on one leg and holding the other in his hands.

"Thunderation!" bawled a long-legged man as the dog made a vicious snap at him, "take that, you brute," and he made a ferocious kick at the poodle, missed by two inches and doubled an old gentleman up.

"Who are you kicking?" screamed the old fellow as soon as he could get his wind back, and he went for the long-legged gentleman's budge with his fist, and made things lively around there for the next few minutes.

"Whoopla! Sail in. Bully for der boss dog," shouted the kid.

"If you don't croak with your boots on for some of these rackets, I'm a false prophet," said Shanks, trying to hide a smile.

"Why, I thort cayenne would be good for a kiidle," laughed the imp.

After finishing their breakfast they went into the smoking-room for a puff, before going downtown on business. While they were enjoying their cigars, an organ-grinder, with a grizzly monkey, commenced grinding out the most dismal dirges in front of the window.

"Jest wag yer ears quiet for 'bout seven seconds, and watch me fix dat monk off," said the kid, and he darted into the kitchen, heated a nickel five cents red hot and returning to the room with it between a pair of pincers, deposited it on the window-sill.

"Tankee, siree," said the grinder, sending the monkey scudding over after the coin.

The monkey chattered, grinned, doffed his little red cap; and then stooped to pick up the nickel.

He grabbed it innocently, unsuspiciously, and with a wild scream of terror darted back and clawed two pawsful of his owner's hair out.

"Sacre mille devils!" shrieked the organ-grinder, hitting the monkey a clip alongside of the head which sent him sprawling and chattering into the gutter.

Then the music-maker smiled a churchyard smile, and came bowing and scraping over after the nickel himself, but the smile faded away into a look of horrified disgust as he clutched the coin, and the next minute he was out on the sidewalk again with an organ on his back and a monkey on his shoulder, sucking his burnt fingers and chewing up the English language into fine hash.

A walking advertisement man tried to quiet him down, but was clubbed over the head by the frantic organ-grinder, who was finally lugged off to the station house by a sleepy-headed cop, still wildly jawing and gesticulating.

"Some of dese days, Chips, yer'll get the grandest highfalutin bounce dat'll send yer a kitin' and wuss dan a balloon," said Shorty, as he leaned back in his chair and grinned.

"You can cook me for dinner if he don't get his neck stretched with a rope necktie and a man to put it on," observed Shanks.

"Time nuff ter squeal when yer snatched an' dere ain't no rat-hole ter scoot out of, dad," grinned the kid, as he slipped off and pinned an old gentleman's coat-tails fast to the chair he was sitting on.

Two minutes later, when the aged citizen tried to get up, and found he was trailing a chair after him, he grew excited, kicked the toenail off a sore toe, tore the tail off his coat, swore till things smelt sulphur, and cavorted around the room in a loose and careless manner.

"What was yer tryin' ter hook der boss' chair for?" asked the kid, after the man had got himself unpinned and was standing before the mantel-piece, gesticulating wildly and struggling for words to express his views on the subject.

"Hook, sir? Why, darn it, boy, this is the most infernal, outrageous and diabolical attack ever made upon me," he howled.

"Dia—who?"

"Diabolical, I said."

"D'yer hav' dat at der same time? I thort 't was a 'tack of the coat-tails that wormed yer," grinned Shorty Junior.

"You're a fool, I see," said the old fellow, angrily, as he pulled off his boot to examine his nailless toe.

"Den, we're related, an' yer've got der 'vantage of me in bizness, ol' stick-in-the-mud," answered Shorty Junior, as he bounced a baseball down on the aged citizen's sore toe and sent him dancing a Sioux war-dance around the room, and threatening to whip all creation and Shorty Junior thrown in.

We will pass over the next two weeks, during which time Shorty Junior, Shanks and Shanks were in a continual state of rush, attending to business connected with their new venture. Advertisements for "stars" of the first order were inserted in all the leading papers. Interviews granted and interviewers bounced, tents, horses, trappings and everything necessary to a high-toned circus, purchased; performers secured, stunning bills and posters got up, and a thousand and one other things attended to.

"Dere, by der criss-cross smoke of Mahomet's pipe! 'F I haven't been as busy as a bee dat's been turned inside out, yer can chalk

me down for a caterpillar," observed Shorty, as he threw himself back in his chair one evening.

"Well, thank the stars, we've got everything about attended to. I spent a young bank paying bills to-day," replied Shanks, stretching his long legs and smiling good-naturedly.

"Mebbe yer t'ink I've been snoozin'. Not much, Sister Jane; I've scooted 'roun' dis town chinnin' burnt corkers wuss dan a long-legged grasshopper; but, as der woman said when she had twins, 'I'se got dem all tergether,'" said the kid, as he fired a sucked orange out of the window and hit a lame-legged man fair in the nose; and that party whirling around seized an unoffending boot-black standing near and cuffed him soundly.

"Got yer whole gang?" asked his dad.

"Yee up."

"All squar' an' high rollers at der biz?"

"Solid blokes."

"Goin' ter keep any of der ol' crowd?"

"Yes, Dave Reed's goin' long."

"D'yer t'ink yer can ring in Buster inter der show?"

"Yer bet yer undershirt."

"But who'd ride 'im?"

"Dunno, 'cept dere's som' codger in der audience dat'd lik' ter tackle 'im," grinnéd the youngster.

"Cause I kno' wher' I can get der wickedest, ugliest, kickinest pair of trick mules eber born, 'f yer say der word," said his paternal.

"Gobble dem, dad, lik' a turtle would a fly."

"Nuff ced, Chips; I'll snipe dem der fust t'ing ter-morrer."

"Why, I wouldn't giv' a straw full of sour beer fer a circus without mules," chimed in Shanks.

"Why, I thort yer an' dad promised ter com' long, er I'd hav' hunted up a pair long ago," chuckled the imp.

He dodged the bootjack Shanks slung at him and it shivered the looking-glass, but he caught the toe of his dad's boot in his rear as he skipped around the table, and for a moment he thought he would never be able to sit down again.

Things were just commencing to get quieted down when there was a timid tap at the door.

"Turn der knob, hyst yer hat an' slide in on yer keno foot," called out Shorty.

"Yaas, sir-ee, I'll cum a hummin'," said a voice, and the door opened, admitting two strapping six-foot countrymen.

"P-h-e-w! Here's a couple of liberty poles," said Shanks.

"Well, fellers, what's der rampage?" asked Shorty.

"Be yu the man that put a bit in the paper 'beout hirin' sum circus-actin' folks?" inquired the oldest and sunburnedest of the pair.

"I'se der corkscrew."

"Wal, we've cum."

"What fer, my noble Dukes der Parsnip?"

"Tu jine yure circus."

"Oh, I savey. What's yer best grip?" asked Shorty, scenting fun ahead.

"Wal, you see I be 'beout the all-firedest tumbler yu ever seen this yere side of Bunker Hill. Josh; yu've hearn tell of Josh, I guess; for he's counted the tarnation critter at ridin' a hoss bareback that ever climbed one," replied the eldest.

"How many hosses can yer flip-flop ober?" asked Shorty.

"Guess yu're little on the pokin' fun, been't yu, Mister? What'd I want tu tumble over hosses fer?"

"Well, peel an' let's see yer sling yerself," said Shorty.

"Right deown here?"

"Speel or climb."

"Speel, it is, Mister, as yu call it," answered the countryman, throwing off his coat and vest, and spitting on his hands; he ran a few feet, bent down, put his head to the carpet and sprawled over, kicking Shanks in the chin with his heels hard enough to loosen his teeth.

"Heow's that for a turnover, Mister?" he asked, getting up and rubbing the top of his head.

"I'll wax you under the ear and give you a turnover backwards if you don't keep them bug-mashing heels to home!" exclaimed Shanks, holding his jaw and glaring savagely at the farmer.

"Is dat all yer can do, popcorn?" inquired Shorty, with a grin.

"Not much, Mister."

"Well, pile in."

"I'm an all-night hoe-downer."

"A what?"

"One of dese fellers, Mister; the step mebbe 'tarn't much or purty, but I kin war' an' tar' eny ordinary critter out on my double shuffle that ever kicked a heel," remarked the agriculturist, as he broke into a heel-knocking, shuffling, country dance.

"Guess yer can skip, cucumbers," said Shorty, after he had concluded his performance.

"Wal, mebbe I could if I tried; I'm purty smart at duin' most things."

"I mean dat yer can sail off on yer ear."

"Not much, Mister; that yere's somethin' I won't 'gage tu tempt; why, how's a feller goin' tu sail on his ear?"

"I mean ter bounce," said Shorty, impatiently.

"I'se kinder 'feard it might jostle my vittles up, Mister."

"Great Caesar! Waltz!"

"Nebber was worth shucks at a shindig, but yu talk 'beout hoein' corn, or droppin' taters, an' I'm round," replied country.

"Great snakes, I mean for yer ter spin," shouted Shorty.

"Wal 'fi deon't git dizzy in my coconut I kin spin's good as the next fellow," said the farmer, opening his arms like a windmill and whirling around on one leg.

The second revolution knocked the clock off the mantel-piece; the fourth hit Shanks alongside of the ear, as he was getting out

of the way, the seventh turn swatted Shorty across his port ear as he was grinning at the others, two more whirls, and he upset a waiter that came in to bring some drinks, mashed a lot of fancy trinkets that Shorty had purchased, stepped on Shanks' foot, and generally stirred up things.

"Go in, pumpkins! Heel and toe it!" shouted Shorty Junior, who had skinned it up on top of the table and was grinning from ear to ear at the whole performance.

"Thar, Mister, kin yur beat that for dust kickin'? When d'your think I'd better cum deown?"

"Der day after resurecshun."

"I been't jokin'."

"Climb out of 'ere."

"Wal, dere don't 'pear to be much tu climb 'cept the mantel-piece, an' I guess any goldarned sawney could shin up on that," said the farmer, and he shinned it up on the place named.

"Great snakes! I want yer ter fly."

"Can't du it, Mister. I thought that yu was goin' tu run a curcus, but yu didn't say nuthin' 'beout balloon 'scursions," said the countryman, reproachfully.

"Jest balloon it out of 'ere."

"Carn't, Mister; never could sail one of them yar merchanies. I told Aunt Jemima I didn't want tu larn."

"Jumpin' hoe-cakes, stupid, I want yer to git up and crawl."

"Oh, I kin crawl, only I'll be honeyswoggled 'fi see what yu want a feller tu crawl in a curcus for," remarked country, getting down on his knees and scrambling around the room, to the amusement of Shanks and the kid, who lay back and roared at Shorty's discomfiture.

"Slide! Slide! Slide off on yer ear!" exclaimed Shorty, jumping up and pacing up and down nervously.

"Neow yu've kinder got me, jedge, an' I reckon as how yure stickin' it on tu a feller tu heavy. Slide off on my ear? I tell yer I deon't believe yu've got a man in pure outfit that kin slide on his ear 'thout fallin' deown on his nose," said country.

"An' yer a bareback rider, Josh, ain't yer?" inquired the kid.

"Yaas."

"Rite on it, hey?"

"Yure dead tu rights, boy."

"Ride anythin'?"

"Oh, I be one of them yer fellers that sticks. Why, I rode at the Punkinville agricultural race and won a riding whip," said the youngest of the brothers, confidently and proudly.

"I guess yer blowin' yer bazoo."

"Me! I be a rider, boy."

"Somfin' red hot?"

"Yes, sir-ee. I kin ride."

"What can yer ride?"

"Why, why a horse, of course."

"All rite. I've sent roun' ter der stable for my pony an' I'll giv' yer a free lunch on 'im if yer rides 'im. Squashes, yer kin set yer self down for a soft snap of a job," said Shorty Junior.

"Oh, I kin ride settin' deown or standin' up on my two feet," said the countryman, confidently.

A few minutes later Buster was led around by an hostler, and the rumor of sport to be seen having leaked forth through Shanks, nearly all the guests of the hotel thronged the windows and stoop.

"Yer dead gone sure yer game nuff ter ride 'im?" inquired the kid, stepping over and taking hold of Buster's bridle.

"Dew you think I'm sich a sawney duffer that I'd try tew jine yure old show ef I couldn't ride one hoss?" said countryman number two.

"Yer rite on der ride, den?"

"Yew bet."

"Purtty snifty on der stick on?"

"Like wax, Mister."

"Well, den yer can bounce dat zebra an' if yer ride 'im, I'll 'gage yer for der circus," said Shorty Junior.

"I wisht he was jist twicet as hard tew sit on so's I could show off," said country.

"Don't yer fret. I t'ink he'll fill der programme, 'thought yer want ter straddle an airthquake."

"Oh, I be a ridist. I'm Josh Plummer, from Salem," said the young farmer, confidently, as he climbed up on the mustang's back and grasped the bridle.

It only took him about four seconds to get on Buster's back, yet it seemed like an age compared to the time he occupied in being flung head over heels off again.

"Gosh, he's a chucker, be'ent he?" he exclaimed, as he picked himself up and scooped some mud out of his ear.

"Did yer forgit somfin'?" asked Shorty Junior, with a grin on his comical little mug that threatened to spread from ear to ear.

"Goldarn him! He kinder pitched me!" said Josh, as he shook himself and scratched his head.

"Bounce 'im agin."

"Yew bet I will. I be'ent goin' ter lose a 'gagement in a boss circus for eny critter."

"Dis time yer better hol' on wid yer knees," advised the kid.

"Dat'd be need-less," shouted Shorty, and a smile was passed around.

"Mebbe you smartys think I can't ride that hoss," said country, angrily.

"You can't ride nothing," said Shanks.

"Why don't yer practice on a saw-horse?" inquired Shorty.

"Better ride in a street-car."

"He's a sick hamfatter to ride!"

"Say, old corncobs, go back an' ride der oxen!" shouted the crowd.

"Pile on ter 'im, Josh, an' hol' on yer hat," said the kid.

"I kinder guess that yew folks is sorter fulled in me!" observed Josh, as he made a leap for Buster's back, but that animal moving out of the way just at that moment he came down sprawling on the pavement.

"Consarn his dirty pictur! I'll ride or bust somethin'!" shouted the would-be circusser, getting up and feeling under his coat-tail, while the crowd roared with laughter.

"Climb up!"

"Bounce 'im, greeny!"

"Straddle 'im an' chuck yer arms 'roun' 'is neck!"

"Sail in, corncobs!"

"Cotch 'im by the ears!"

"Take hold of his tail!"

"Don't be 'fraid; jump up on 'im, turniptops!"

"Yure awful smart, arn't you?" asked Josh.

Then he took off his coat, settled his hat firmly over his eyes, spit on both hands and threw himself upon the mustang's back.

"Now, den, yer've got 'im," laughed the kid, as he let go the bridle.

He might have had him, but it is a question of doubt in the minds of the lookers-on, for two seconds later he was trying to bore a hole in the pavement with his head, and pointing up at the cloudless sky with his number eleven unblacked shoes.

"Durn yure blamed horse, and yure hull goldurned show! I wouldn't ride sich a critter as that are 'f thar never was a curcus," said Josh, when he had been helped up, his hat straightened out and some ice water, keys, penknives, corkscrews and button-hooks dropped down his back to bring him to.

"Oh, it'll neber do ter giv' it up so, Josh,
It'll neber do ter giv' it up so,"

sang Shorty Junior.

"Yer'll mak' all der show boys sick wid' yer ridin'," said his dad.

"Get some mucilage and gum yourself on to him, lima beans," suggested Shanks, with a grin.

"If yew fellers got eny idear that Josh Plummer's a foot-ball tew be kicked an' slung round, yure fulled, 'cause I arn't."

"But the circus?"

"Blast yure curcus! I be goin' hum tew hoe corn," exclaimed the disgusted countryman, and he started down the street, shaking his head and feeling the sore spots he had gathered.

"Say, Chips, yer ort ter call Buster der circus tester," laughed Shorty.

"Oh, dat puts me in mind, dad, dat we hain't got a name for our show yet," replied Chips, as he sent Buster back to the stable and joined his paternal.

"That's so," said Shanks.

"Nebber thort of der baptism," grinned Shorty.

"Well, le's pick out a highflyer," suggested the kid.

"How would the same name the minstrels had, do?" asked Shanks.

"Nixy, cully, 'cause I's goin' ter fun dis show all over Europe on der fust hurrah, an' I'se goin' ter open Johnny Bull, Jimmy Pollyvoss and Dutchy Bismark's eyes as ter how a 'Merican boy can run a show," said the kid, earnestly.

"Union Combination?" suggested Shanks.

"Not much."

"The Centennial can't be beat," proposed Shorty.

"Nixy ag'in."

"United States Grand Circus," said Shanks, after raking his head.

"Ter hefty ter carry roun'."

"American Circus," said Shorty.

"Too much of der lap-dog business 'bout dat. I want somfin' dat's goin' ter wake 'em up an' mak' 'em howl when dey hear I'se comin'," answered his boy.

"Well, what do you suggest yourself?" asked Shanks, after a pause, during which both him and Shorty had puzzled their brains for an appropriate name.

"S'pose we call it der Yankee Boy's Circus, I t'ink dat 'd be a wide-awaker," said Shorty Junior.

"It's yer show, an' yer've der rite ter name it. Zip, Zip an' a tiger for der 'Yankee Boy's Circus!'" exclaimed Shorty, enthusiastically.

"Good enough. 'Yankee Boy's Circus' it is, and you bet it'll be the boss," said Shanks.

CHAPTER III.

"Dad, everyting is scrumptious an' der goose hangs high up!" exclaimed Shorty Junior, dancing into the room where his paternal and Shanks were seated.

"As I ain't takin' no poultry biz in mine let 'er hang," replied his dad, leaning back lazily in his easy chair and blowing smoke rings up at the ceiling.

"If you can't reach up to where your friend the goose is hanging, better hire a step ladder," remarked Shanks, starting up from a doze.

"Are yer ter hire, daddy longlegs?" inquired Chips, climbing up on the back of the latter's chair and dropping a few hot ashes from his cigarette down Shanks' neck.

"Gods of war, I'm in a flame!" shouted our long-legged friend, springing from the sofa and in one leap reaching the middle of the floor.

"Crazy as a bedbug!" remarked Shorty, as he watched his chum peeling off his coat and vest and slamming them down on the floor.

"Fleas!" suggested the kid.

"Fleas be teetotally darned! There's a million tons of red-hot

coals down my back!" yelled Shanks, trying to haul his shirt off without unbuttoning it at the neck.

"Better fotch in der cops, an' hav' der lunytic jerked out of 'ere 'fore he hurts somebody," observed Shorty, who was roaring with laughter at the comical figure Shanks cut, as he danced around the room with his shirt over his head.

"Hurt? I'd carve the villain into inch-long bits that done it!" howled Shanks, from under his shirt.

"Dis 'ere beats a firework exhibition all ter flinders," grinned the kid.

"Why don't yer sit down, an' mak' yerself comfortable, an' not go skippin' 'round der room lik' a long-legged grasshopper, or a Pawnee Injun in a scalp dance?" asked Shorty, as he saw his partner stumble over a footstool, and get up wilder and more frantic than ever.

"K'rect, ol' one; keep cool an' order up some ice scream!" chimed in the imp, with a comical smirk.

"Cool, fire and brimstone, I'm scorched, burnt to a crisp."

"Den yer can join the 'Sons of Crisp in,'" laughed Shorty.

"One keno for dad on der middle row," said his mischievous son. "Won't one of you grinching idiots help me off with this cursed shirt! I'm smothering!" bawled Shanks, who had got down in a sitting posture, and was pulling as hard as a team of oxen at the garment to get it over his head.

"Yer bet I will; an', Chips, yer mite skate out an' fetch in a fire engine ter play up his back an' stop der conflagration settin' fire ter der house," said Shorty, jumping up, coming to his friend's rescue and quietly releasing him.

"If you stir after an engine, or any other water-works, I'll fix you for a hospital," screamed Shanks, the moment he got his head released.

"What's dis hurrah 'bout, anyhow?" asked Shorty, as Shanks was trying to get a glimpse of his burnt back in the looking-glass.

"Means that my whole spinal column's charred till I don't know if there is any of it left."

"Why, dere's nuthin' der matter wid yer back, pard," said Shorty.

"Bug bit 'im, I guess," chirped Chips.

"Bugs, nothing! Don't you suppose I know the difference 'tween a bug and a lot of hot coals of fire?" replied Shanks, indignantly.

It took half a box of cold cream, and half an hour's persuasion to get him into his shirt and quieted down, and even then he sat down swearing that he was going to put the best detectives in the city to work on the case.

"Now 'f yer smart 'Aleck's' ll jest stow yer chin-music an' jerk me a flash of silence, I'll tell yer what I commenced ter, when Shanks dere was tuk wid der fit," observed the kid, when things had got settled so as you could hear yourself speak without shouting.

"Spin yer cuffer, boy; my mouth's shut as tight as a clam's."

"Spit out your yarn, but I still insist I could and can lick the wretched man that burnt my back, if he was as big as Bunker Hill Monument," assented Shanks, with a growl.

"Well, den, gov, I t'ink dere's nuthin' now to hinder us paintin' der fences wid our posters an' show bills, histin' up der tent, runnin' up der flags, trottin' out our hosses, an' tellin' der folks ter waltz long an' see der biggest show eber struck out from dis boss city."

"Yer all ready for der bell ter ring?" asked his dad.

"Lead sure."

"Got your crowd all on the spot?"

"Shake 'em all up in half an hour."

"Well, den der sooner we flame out der better, for every day lost is a scorchin' old bleed on our pocketbooks," said Shorty.

"Worse than a leech army when they're hungry," moaned Shanks.

"Den ter-morrer I'll hang out der banner, an' let t'ings loose," answered the kid.

The day following found New York brilliantly illuminated with the gayest and brightest of red, white, and blue posters and show bills announcing by whooping old pictures and startling letters the debut of the Yankee Boy's Circus and Grand Minstrel Combination.

"Don't spare der bills, but plaster 'em up on eberyting dat'll hold one, from der Battery ter Harlem, for dis ain't none of yer snide shows," had been Shorty Junior's order to the billposters, and the city was fairly ablaze with excitement before night.

"Say, you Nick, how's dat for a high ol' bobolinkum show?" exclaimed a newsboy, as he watched the raising of the giant tri-color tent.

"Gosh, ain't she a hummer?" replied Nick, as he took a reef in his pantaloons.

"Yer bet yer eyebrows. Oh, dat Shorty Junior ain't no slouch 'bout anyting."

"Dat's what's der matter, Nick. He's jest der loudest little rustler ever turned a flip-flop."

"Is he goin' ter show up hisself?"

"Yer talkin' dead ter rites he is; why, it's his show. Don't yer see Shorty Junior's der boss duck."

"Goin'?"

"Ebery nite 'fi 'ave ter go widout my chuck an' pawn my Sunday duds," said Jakey, positively.

"Well, I'se a goin' ter scoop it in, too, an' dem oder bootblacks 'as got ter stan' back dis week an' watch me sling a brush, or dere'll be som' heads punched roun' my corners. Black yer butes, sir?"

"I wonder how der t'ing goin' ter tak'. Now, 'f 'twas der burnt cork biz 'lone, I could sail in an' giv' der kid som' points; but I ain't ther on dis kind of biz," remarked Shorty to his chum as they drove up to the circus on the opening night.

"I'll gamble every red I'm worth that the kid makes a hit," answered Shanks, assuringly.

Passing in by a back entrance, they found the immense tent jammed with an eager, anxious crowd.

"Jest in time, dad, ter see me open der ball," said Shorty Junior, who, mounted on Buster, stood ready, waiting to lead in the opening pageant.

"Yer ain't goin' ter ride dat thundercloud in dere 'fore dem lites an' dat music?" inquired his dad, anxiously.

"Dat's jest what's der matter, pop."

"Then, if your goose ain't cooked, I'm a flounder."

"Nary cook."

The music struck up, the entrance to the ring was thrown open, and Shorty Junior dashed into the circle, followed by the gay and glittering troupe.

For one instant Buster stood stock still and with flashing eyes, tossing mane and switching tail, surveyed the strange scene; the next moment, with a wild snort of fear and defiance, he reared up till he stood perfectly straight and pawed the air madly with his front feet.

"If yer'd rather trabel on two legs dan four I'se willin'," said Shorty Junior, angrily, as he drove the spurs sharply into the mustang's sides.

This was more than Buster could stand, and with a mad leap he dashed like a comet around the ring, scattering and upsetting the glittering pageant right and left.

"Skin out, all yer fellers, an' giv' me a clean show!" yelled the kid, as he made the third circuit of the ring and sent half a dozen monarchs, who were in his retinue, rolling in the sawdust.

You can bet, boys, the crowd were not slow in taking advantage of Shorty Junior's advice, and in less than a minute he had the ring to himself.

Meanwhile the audience seeing this was something "fresh," and not down on the bills, took up the cry. The ladies screamed and closed their eyes.

"Stop him somebody and take him out!"

"The child's run away with!"

"Are you going to kill us all?"

"This is terrible!"

"Catch him by the bridle, somebody!"

"He'll trample on all of us," yelled the timid portion of the gentlemen.

"Keep yer seats; I'll fetch 'im 'f takes all dis nite an' termor!" shouted Shorty Junior, as he curbed and spurred his plunging steed.

"Stick ter 'im, Shorty!"

"I hain't got no money, but I kin lick der galoot dat says Shorty won't worry dat hoss out 'fore yer know it!" exclaimed Jake, jumping up and rolling up his red flannel shirt sleeves.

There were no takers.

"Fi don't dere'll be one dead horse ter be dragged out by der tail, chums," said Shorty Junior, as Buster stopped for a moment and pawed viciously.

"Hurrah for Shorty Junior!"

"Oh, no, he ain't tuff! Somebody else, mebbe!"

"Hunky boy, Shorty," shouted the boys.

"Tak' it out of 'im, kid, 'f yer roll 'im in der dust. Never do ter weaken on 'im now!" exclaimed Shorty, as the boy flew around the ring like the wind.

"Dad, I neber weakened yet in my life."

"Game to the heels!" cried Shanks. "Go it, little one."

"All rite, my covey, but I'se got der drop on ter 'im now," replied Shorty Junior, as he brought the black mustang so suddenly to a halt that he came down sitting on his haunches, his nostrils distended and his satin coat flecked with white foam.

"Want ter be der boss an' run der machine, d'yer? Guess yer've got 'nuff of it dis time," laughed the imp as he slipped out of the saddle and raised his steed by the bridle.

"Rah for our side! I know'd he'd do it, fellers. Now git up on yer toenails an' howl hip, hip 'rah an' a tigah for der sniftiest rider in dis country, an' der snoozer dat don't holler loud nuff ter loosen his back teeth, he's my mutton!" shouted Newsboy Jake, jumping up and swinging his tattered and peakless cap high above his head.

His words seemed electric, for the immense audience, which had remained spellbound, at the almost certainty of the child's being hurled every second from his saddle, rose to a man at ragged Jake's invitation and three such cheers—and I mustn't forget the royal tiger, as greeted Shorty Junior on his triumph have seldom been given in the old metropolis.

"Tanks fust ter dat little feller ober dere, who neber lost his grip on ter me in my tuffest minit," said Shorty Junior, bowing and pointing over to where Newsboy Jake was seated on the edge of the ring. "An' next ter der rest of yer for yer kind and bully good 'pause. I'se a mos' ter little ter talk big yet 'f i can fetch a bolitin' hoss down ter 'is milk, but if der band 'll speel once more der fust part ober, I'll polka dat scattered gang of mine out ag'in."

And thus opened the first performance of the Yankee Boy's Circus.

The grand entry was a success in every sense of the word. Buster had had quite enough of the rioting business and settled down to his work with a crestfallen air, as much as to say the next thing I'll be doing will be hauling a coal car or dragging an omnibus.

The rest of the show passed off hummily; Shorty Junior, as a miniature clown, kept the house in a shout of laughter at his funny actions. The riding was the best by far ever witnessed in this city, and drew down hearty rounds of applause. The costumes were simply elegant and gorgeous, and the rest of the show came up to

the above, so that when the trick mules finally trotted off, leaving everybody in a broad guffaw, the Yankee Boy's Circus was generally pronounced to be about the boss show that ever sprinkled sawdust or sported a clown.

The minstrel performance at the close of the circus was an eye-opener to the audience, accustomed as they had been to witnessing second and third rate talent connected with circuses. They were astonished and more than pleased to find themselves entertained and amused by the best stars and delineators of Ethiopian minstrelsy in the land. Shorty, at his son's request, consented to once more black up and appear with the kid in some of their inimitable, side-splitting acts, saying in reply to a remonstrance of Shanks:

"Dat's so, pard, I did say I'd knocked off der burnt cork for der rest of my life, an' I thort I had; but den yer kno' dat Shorty fat never soured on a friend yet, an' I'll be biled down for soap fat 'f i'm goin' ter see der kid skunked 'count of me, d'yer tumble?"

"Why, I was only coddlin', chum. It don't take a house to fall on me to make me tumble, and rather than see Chips up a tree I'd paint myself pea-green and try a jig, though I never danced a step in my life," replied Shanks, patting his little friend affectionately on his shoulders.

Of course, as in former days, Shorty and Shorty Junior brought down the house, and cheers mixed with shouts of laughter and wild, enthusiastic calls from the boys greeted their attempts to please, and it was only after repeated encores and the lateness of the hour that they were allowed to bow themselves out of the ring.

"Well, that agony's over," remarked Shanks, as he lit a cigar, and started out of the tent for a walk to the hotel.

"Goin' ter hoof it down ter our roostin' place?" asked Shorty.

"Yes, I want to get the kinks and wrinkles out of these legs of mine."

"Bile 'long den, I'm wid yer."

"How d'yer tink der ting panned out, dad?" inquired Shorty Junior, tossing a beggar a wooden peach, and watching the look of astonishment and disgust that spread over his features, on his attempt to bite into it.

"It was a three-story French roof hit, but I thort der whole machine was kerflummixed an' der caboodle of us stepped on, when I saw yer cavingt on an' skinnin' roun' der ring on dat black son-of-a-sea-cook hoss of yern," replied his dad.

"It was a busting old success from the word 'go,' and I guess very few shows ever opened with as original a performance."

The next evening found the tent full to overflowing. Shorty Junior's wild ride had been related in every street in the city. The morning papers came out with a glowing account of the performance, and the people fairly swarmed to see our little hero.

Buster, on coming into the ring, behaved much better, though he showed his dislike to the whole affair by snuffing the air disdainfully, tossing his beautiful head, pawing the sawdust, and cantering sideways around the ring.

"I guess dat lesson last nite made 'im com' ter time; why, he's lik' a tame kitten," muttered Shorty Junior, as Buster went prancing through the evolutions required.

But he changed his mind somewhat two minutes later, when a handsome piebald charger, chancing to come too close to him in wheeling, Buster made a lightning grab, seized the unfortunate piebald by the ear, and held fast, at the same moment letting fly his hind feet and kicking the King of Spain out of the saddle.

Then there was another general scatter of the riders, their experience of the night before looming up fresh and vividly before them. They skedaddled in every direction, bawling and yelping like a lot of lunatics. The piebald steed snorted with pain, and flung his rider over his head, and still Buster held on, while Shorty Junior sawed away at the bit and drove his spurs into his ribs.

"Whoopla! Why, dis circus beats Buffalo Bill on der warpath!" shouted Newsboy Jake, who was in his old place.

A moment later and Shorty Junior succeeded in forcing Buster to let go, but the impressiveness of the scene was gone "where the woodbine twineth," for that night at least.

Maybe, boys, the audience didn't shout and laugh after it was all over, and Shorty Junior was cantering toward the opening leading into the dressing-tent.

"Nuther red-hot an' still a heating opening scene," remarked his dad, as he rode in and jumped off; "pears ter me yer'd croak an' turn yer toes up in one day if yer didn't hav' a racket."

"Oh, run 'round der corner an' pump water on yerself; how d'yer s'pose I kno'd Buster wanted an ear; 'fi had, I'd giv' 'im an ear of corn," grinned the imp, trotting off to get himself up in his bareback-act rig.

"I expect to see him get pitched clear through the top of the tent," remarked Shanks, half an hour later as he heard the military-dressed ringmaster announce:

"Now we will have the most wonderful performance of the evening. Mr. Shorty Junior appearing as a bareback rider on the celebrated and untamed mustang, Buster."

"Crickalorum! He's der pill dat I bets on, fites and votes for ebery pop!" exclaimed Newsboy Jake, enthusiastically, as two grooms with difficulty led the fiery animal again into the ring, closely followed by Shorty Junior, in a magnificent suit of white silk tights with black velvet trunk.

"Don't you do it, little fellow, we know you're game!"

"No, don't try it!"

"He'll kill you sure!"

"Throw you off and trample on you!"

"Please don't for my sake!" said a lady. "He'll murder you! look at his eyes!"

"Your neck'll be broken!"

"Why don't somebody stop him and prevent his being killed?"

shouted the audience as Shorty, with a comical grin on his face, stood bowing before them.

"An' what d'yer say, Jake?" demanded the kid, glancing over to where his humble admirer stood up clapping his hands, regardless of a thousand threats and admonitions to sit down.

"I say go it, Shorty, ef it busts ebery bone yer got hangin' round yer body," yelled Jake, and he tossed his old cap into the ring in his excitement.

"Dat settles it! Giv' me a toss on ter his back an' stan' clar!" shouted the imp.

The ringmaster lifted him into the saddle and escaped being kicked in two by a close inch.

The way he made for the center pole was a caution, and brought forth a roar of laughter.

"Let 'im bulge, fellers," said Shorty Junior, as soon as he felt himself on the mustang's back.

The man sprang away to the right and left, and Buster stood free, excepting a small bridle and pair of delicate reins.

For a moment he shook himself as if he was about to dash like a whirlwind back to his native prairies; then, with a bound, he sprang forward and circled the ring till it made the audience dizzy to follow him.

"Tuff, but I'll do it or bust," muttered Shorty Junior, and while the mustang was whirling around in his mad flight and people's faces grew pale with fear, he drew a long breath, and scrambling on to his feet stood erect, steadyng himself by the bridle reins alone. The cheers and yells that went up when a few minutes later he brought Buster to a halt, and dismounting, stood bowing before them, must have knocked a hole in the clouds up above.

"My gizzard somehow feels ter big for ter let me hoorar, but, oh, golly, 'fi only had a cannon wouldn't I fire her off slam bang," cried Jake, in a hoarse voice, that showed how closely he had followed the flight and daring act.

"Pshaw! I'll bet a bucket of wine that there was some trick about it," said a dandily-dressed Fifth avenue fop, who had been drinking some of what he wished to bet.

"Yer bet yer four eyes dat dere's a trick 'bout it yer'll never get inter dat mullet head of yern," replied Shorty Junior, laughing.

"Why, I can ride that Pegasus," said the dandy, getting up and coming toward the ring.

"Ah, swim out; yer over yer head," suggested Jake, indignantly.

"Put him out!"

"Let him ride!"

"Bounce him!"

"Let him try!"

"Give him a chance."

"He'll get enough of it!"

"Guess he's fresh, ain't he?" screamed the crowd.

"An' yer t'ink yer can ride dat plug dere?" asked Shorty Junior, pointing to where Buster was being held by the two grooms.

"Certainly, fellah; ride him as good as you."

"Got any stamps 'bout yer clothes says so?"

"Of course I have plenty of money."

"Well, I don't care ter win yer sugar on such a dead sure t'ing, or I'd stick up against yer."

"Ha! Ha! You're trying to sneak out of it, hey? I knew that prancing business was all a trick and that I could ride that pelter just as good as you," chuckled the dandy.

"Der proof of der puddin's der eatin'; polka rite along 'ere an' le's see yer squat 'im," said Shorty Junior.

"Why, I've rode animals cost ten times as much as he ever did," muttered the dandy, climbing over the ring rope, amid the shouts and laughter of the audience, many of whom believed it was a preconcerted job and part of the programme, and that the swell was a dummy and would turn out one of the troupe disguised.

"Now, then, if you'll assist me to mount this fiery steed, I'll show you how I'll tame him," drawled the swell.

The ringmaster didn't like the job for a cent, but he came reluctantly forward, followed by the ridist, who, with an attempt at bravado, slapped Buster on the haunches and exclaimed:

"Whoa! Stand—"

He might have intended to have said more, only about this time the mustang drifted his stern around and kicked him fair between the shoulders, sending him rolling head over heels in the sawdust.

They picked him up, patted him on the back till he got his breath again, braced him up against the center pole and administered about four fingers of old rye, before he felt himself equal to the next attempt.

"Gracious! I thought sure something had fell down on me," he remarked, as they led him up to the sacrifice the second time.

This time he got mounted, Buster standing suspiciously quiet.

"Skate now, four eyes!" shouted Shorty Junior, and the men

jumped away from Buster's head, setting him free.

Buster's first movement on feeling a strange person on his back was to shake himself so violently that the dandy thought he would fall to pieces, then suddenly gathering himself he shot ahead a few yards, halted and ducking his head sent the swell flying upside down in among the audience, who fairly made the neighborhood ring with their laughter.

They gathered him together and repaired him as well as they could, but seventeen locomotives could hardly have drawn him within twenty feet of Buster again.

CHAPTER IV.

"Mebbe dere's som' oder pillgarlic hoss riders 'ere dat'd lik' ter climb dat plug 'fore we absquatulate," grinned Shorty Junior, looking around the crowded seats.

Nobody budged, and Newsboy Jake fairly hugged himself with pleasure at the very idea of a fresh victim.

"Is dere anybody else squattin' 'round dat t'inks dere was anyting snide 'bout dat ridin', let 'im slide rite dis way an' I'll prove it ter 'im."

There was no one moved in the immense audience.

"Cause if dere's any clam dat'll straddle an' stick on ter dat hoss for five minits scootin', he can jest crawl up and finger five hundred of der greenest greenbacks eber he swiped," challenged the kid.

"Hold on, mister, what was that ther yew sed?" said a tall, long-faced, countryfied-looking Yankee, waving his hand.

"Oh, wipe off yer chin, Yank, an' drop on yerself; yer don't s'pose yer could sit on dat nag longer dan litenin'd stick ter der limb of a tree, d'yer?" asked Shorty Junior, wheeling around and looking up at his downcast applicant.

"Ther be'ent nuthin' on ter my chin 'cepting my whiskers. What did yew say consarnin' that money?"

Shorty Junior repeated his generous offer.

"Then I'll be tarnally blasted teu thunder ef I arn't goin' teu try for yure spondulicks," exclaimed Yank, standing up; and he was trying to edge his way down through the crowd, when a shrill female voice screamed:

"Jonathan, yew Jonathan! Cum right straight back teu yure seat, en deon't go makin' a live fule of yureself."

"I'm going teu ride that hoss, Jemima," he replied, without looking back.

"Now, if sum of yew fellers 'll giv' me a boost up on him, yu'll see me make him scrounch," he said, going over toward Buster, just in time to catch that animal's left hind foot in his lap, and Jonathan sat down hastily, and with an expression that seemed to indicate a desire to leave this wicked world.

When they started him up he hadn't any more wind than a busted balloon, but he came to a few seconds later, slung his hat and vest down on top of his torn coat, and strode over to Buster again.

"Yew carn't deu that agin, yew black skunk!" he exclaimed.

"Stand still, Buster!" said Shorty Junior, as they helped Jonathan up on his back.

"Neow yew men kin let him skedaddle ef he warnts ter."

"Nuff sed!" exclaimed the kid, letting go the bridle and slapping the mustang on the hips.

This time Buster, on finding his head free, gave a bound forward and flew around the ring three times like a comet, the Yankee laying flat down and holding on by his neck; but on the fourth circuit he suddenly stopped by bracing his front feet, and Jonathan was sent turning somersaults halfway over the ring, and plowing up the sawdust with his nose and chin.

"Say, mister, I deon't think I want teu win that five hundred dollars; I think I'd rather be buried somewhar round 'ere," remarked Jonathan, when he had been picked up, wiped up, ice put on his head, and his body carried out of the ring.

"That's another Eastern country heard from!" shouted somebody in the audience.

"Who's elec'ted?" asked another.

"Brother Jonathan is, to stay home and ride gates and saw-horses."

"Next!" shouted a barber.

"Ain't dere som' peanut planted round 'ere dat wants a free ride and a shampoo on his ear thrown in?" asked Newsboy Jake, sarcastically.

"Nice horse that for a sick man to ride," observed another.

"I guess dey've had nuff of ridin', so yer can hustle der nag out, an' look out for 'im," said Shorty Junior.

But hustling the nag out proved to be a bigger job than they bargained for. Buster, just about that time took it into his head that everything wasn't lovely, and dropping his head, he grabbed a mouthful out of one of the groom's shoulders.

"Oh! Ow! Ouch! Owdy!" screamed the man, dropping the bridle and skipping around the ring.

Buster opened his jaws and made a grab at the other man, who let go and scooted.

"Whoa, there!" shouted Shorty Junior, running over towards the horse.

But Buster didn't whoa worth a cent. Tossing his head high in the air, he galloped madly around the ring and finally springing over the circle, he scattered the musicians right and left with a few well-directed kicks, filling the tent with small drums, brass instruments and frightened musicians.

"Ter duvel!" exclaimed the Dutch bass-drummer, on finding himself kicked through his big drum.

Buster was captured soon after, and led away, but the music from the band was knocked sky high for that evening, the leader having caught both of Buster's heels "red-hot and on the fly," while most of the brass instruments had been kicked and stepped on.

"Dere ain't no use talkin', dat dere hoss is a whole sarsus in hisself, an' what he don't know 'bout devilment 'tain't any use tryin' ter pint out ter 'im," said Newsboy Jake, who had warmly applauded Buster, as if he had done something meritorious.

"Dat hoss is better nor six picnics ter Coney Island," asserted his chum, Nick, who was seated alongside of him.

Shorty Junior followed Buster out, and once more shifting his duds, appeared with the trick mules as a clown.

"Now if dere's any feller dat's on der ride, an' wants ter pick up fifty greens, he can hav' dem if he'll stick on ter one of dese patent bouncin' merchnices tree times roun' der ring," said Shorty Junior, sticking out his foot and grinning as the ringmaster stumbled over it and skinned his nose against the center pole.

"See heah, boss, is I'se gwine ter get fifty dollars if I ride dat

dere mule free times round?" asked a Thompson street darky, on whose face charcoal would make a white mark.

"Dat's what der matter, Sambo," said the kid.

"Shuah pop?"

"Dead sure!"

"I'se gwine ter try dem, boss."

"Waltz rite along."

"Will dey kick, yer t'ink, boss?"

"Yes, sir-ee."

"Well, I ain't much 'fraid of mules, 'cause I used ter 'tend dem down souf two times as big as them fellers," said the darky, coming down the steps and depositing his hat and coat on the edge of the ring.

"Nuder gran' whoop 'em up bounce," said Newsboy Jake, nudging his chum in the ribs.

"Tain't my funeral, an' I ain't goin' to cry," said Ike.

"No, but dey better hurry up der mourners 'f dey wants ter see der end of 'im."

"I guess der end of 'im'll be tryin' ter bore a hole thro' dat sawdust som'wher'."

"I mean his latter end," said Jakey.

"An' I means der end dat's got his nose glued ter it."

"Smart, ain't yer; guess yer must be runnin' for a clown's posish," muttered Jakey.

"Som' folks is allers clowns," answered Ike, sarcastically.

"I'll clown yer rite under der lef' ear 'f yer giv' me any of yer slack," said Jake, angrily; and Ike, knowing he meant every letter of what he said, dried up.

"Which ov dose mules is der one ye t'ink I can't ride, boss?" asked the darky, spitting on his hands, and rolling up his shirt sleeves.

"Don't mak' a dif of bitterness, pile on ter either of dem," said Shorty Junior, smiling.

"Well, I t'ink I'll tackle dat gray one, den, fust."

"Fust an' last, I t'ink," grinned the kid, running over and catching the mule.

"Ere's yer gray one," called out Shorty Junior, a moment later.

The darky approached him slowly and hesitatingly till he got within about ten feet, then making a bold dash, he rushed forward and clasped the mule around the neck with his arms.

"Now, g'long, g'long!" he yelled.

But instead of going along with any degree of rapidity, the mule laid his ears back till they pointed to his tail, and deliberately lay down on top of the darky.

"Heah, see yeah, you mule, you, I'll pound de whole head off you!" yelled the darky, crawling out and spitting the sawdust out of his mouth.

"What's der matter, Sambo?" asked Shorty Junior.

"Nuffin', boss, only de mule got sleepy."

"Bounce on to 'im now."

"See heah, boss, dat—"

Just then the mule launched out with both hind feet, and Sambo took a flying leap across that ring, striking on his chin and making things look as if they were under a cloud for a few moments.

"Who frowned dat, boss?" demanded the darky, scrambling to his feet and scratching his head.

"I t'ink dat der mule slung dat," said Shorty Junior.

"Now hol' on, boss. I'll jest git square wid dat mule."

"Yer'd better keep yer eyes skinned."

"Shoh, boss."

"All rite, sail in on yer tooth."

This time Sambo bent himself almost double, and like an Indian on the warpath, came bobbing along toward the mule's head, who allowed him to get within snapping distance, then, ducking his wicked old head, he caught the poor darky by the back of the shirt and gave him a hunky old shake.

"Hol' on dere. Gash darn!" bawled the darky, as he felt himself hustled around and his back getting pinched.

Shorty Junior hurried to his rescue and forced the mule to let go.

"Wha's de madder wid dat mule, boss? 'Pears as how ye don't giv' 'im much ter eat," exclaimed Sambo, getting up and shaking his fist angrily at the mule.

"Oh, ye long-eared kick-up, jes' ye keep on foolin' wid dis dark, an' ye'll find yerself bounced as dey calls it," said the darky, taking a fresh reef in his pantaloons and coming forward.

He was about five minutes getting on this time, and he did not consume five seconds in getting off. He got off over the mule's head and stood for half a second on his eyebrow, then he sank down and stirred up the sawdust with his body, while the audience roared with laughter.

But Sambo didn't join in, as the mule, about that time, was scooting after and shaking hands with him with its left hind leg.

"See yeah—oww!" shouted the flying darky, as the mule wheeled and let him have it fair on the place he sat down on.

"Stick ter 'im, dark," grinned Shorty Junior.

"Cotch 'im by der ears, Sam!"

"Stick yer legs under him, moke!"

"Grab him by the tail!"

"Lay down and grip him!"

"Send it, nig!"

"He's after you!"

"Go it, dark!"

And the darky did go it for all he knew how, and was everlastingly putting in big licks when the mule came skipping along and let fly a broadside with both hind feet that sent Sambo head over heels.

"Say, Ike, I guess dat shade's got 'nuff of mule ridin', don't yer?" asked Newsboy Jake.

"Come, try 'im ag'in, snowball!" laughed Shorty Junior.

"No, sah-ee," gasped the darky, who had clambered over the ring and stood rubbing himself.

"Yes, come on, he's tame now as a kitten," said the kid.

"Den I ain't nebbur goin' ter try an' ride a kitten, for, foah de Lord, ef dah eber was a born debbel an' manufactured not ter ride, dat dere mule is der one," said the darky, putting on his old coat and shaking his head.

Shorty Junior's first act on leaving the ring that evening was to slide around to the ticket office, secure a package of tickets, and wrapping them up in a ten dollar bill, send them round by a supe to Newsboy Jake.

"Oh pshaw! Sugar! Guess not; mebbe I ain't goin' to circus it up ter der handle. Money, too!" exclaimed Jake, as he opened his prize.

"What yer git?" asked Ike.

"Don't squeal."

"Nor'up."

"Den jest look at dere tickets for der best seats in der house, an' more money dan I eber had 'fore in my hull life. Oh, mebbe dat Shorty feller ain't a brick."

"Say, giv' us a couple, or I'll hiss 'im."

"Gee 'up. I'll giv' yer couple, but I'll lick der whole circus 'f dey eber hissed as much as a two-day ol' goose," said Jake, emphatically.

"Noder jam of a house," remarked Shorty, as they were walking home that evening.

"Why, that boy takes like a house afire!" said Shanks.

"What d'yer t'ink of dat bareback act, Goo?" asked Shorty Junior.

"Good 'nuff, only dat I wished he chucked yer clean thro' der top of der tent."

"And I prayed he might sling you twice as high," said Shanks.

"'Fi was on der spring I'd bounce, but seen's I ain't I'se glue," replied Shorty Junior, touching a sleepy policeman on the nose with his lighted cigarette.

"Jingo!" yelled the cop, springing up and drawing his club fiercely.

"Der snoozer jest scooted roun' der corner, mister!" said Shorty Junior.

"I'll send him up for seventeen years!" exclaimed the policeman, rushing around the corner like a dog with a tin pan tied to his narrative.

"Say, pop, what's der nex' hurra, when we pull out of 'ere?" inquired Shorty Junior, after the cop had disappeared.

"Well, I'll tell yer, Chips, I t'ink dat Europe's der best layout for us," said Shorty.

"By jove, that's so!" exclaimed Shanks.

"Run der whole show over?" asked the kid.

"Course."

"Hosses and der whole institution."

"Jest as yer stan', I t'ink dat yer ort ter show dem fellers cross der water what a Yankee boy can turn out, an' 'f dere's anythin' dat can tak' der starch out of dis show, den yer put me in a tater patch wid a hoe," said Shorty.

"Be the biggest thing out, and coin money like a mint," chimed in Shanks, enthusiastically.

"Well, I'se in for it," said the kid.

"When can yer pull up an' git out?"

"Darned short time."

"How long? 'Cause der steamer sails der day after ter-morrer."

"I'se dere, dad."

"Sure yer'll be ready?" asked the father.

"Dead sure."

"Den I'll 'gage passage fer der gang an' look out fer our staterooms," said Shorty.

Two days later the Cunarder, Russia, steamed out of New York with the Yankee Boy's Circus on board and bound for Liverpool.

The evening after they left, the kid, his dad and Shanks were seated on deck, when the former suddenly jumped up and said:

"Hol' on, dad, till I giv' yer a bustin' ol' racket."

Then slipping down to his stateroom, he quickly donned his monkey rig and watching his opportunity he sneaked back, and skinned up in the rigging just over two old tars' heads.

"Say, alligator foot, how's der wind?" he called out, after he was safely perched.

The sailors, who were enjoying their evening smoke, took one glance upward and started:

"By the shades of Davy Jones' locker, it's the devil!" exclaimed one.

"By Neptune, the thing can talk!" said another.

"This is the last cruise I make on this ship!" said one of the men.

"It's the devil, 'thout-doubt!"

"They can climb that rigging if they've a mind to but you don't catch Jack Tar up it."

A few moments later the first officer came out, and was promenading the deck with a lady, when Shorty Junior dropped some pennies on his cap.

"Goodness gracious! What's all this?" he exclaimed, starting back and looking up in the rigging.

"Hello, brass buttons! How's 'Trix?" asked the monkey.

"Darn it, if it can't talk!" said the officer, with open eyes and mouth.

"Talk! Why, I'se yer grand-daddy."

"The devil and General Jackson you are."

"Come up an' giv' me a kiss," said Shorty Junior.

"Oh—oh—oh!" screamed the young lady.

"Really, this is something unusual," said the officer, and he ran in and notified the captain, who hastened out of his cabin.

"Hello, Cap! Yank 'er off a point or yer'll sandbank us!" screamed Shorty Junior, as the captain came out of the cabin and looked up at him.

"By Jupiter! What's that thing?" exclaimed the captain.

"Looks somfin' lik' a monkey," said Shorty, who with Shanks were splitting their sides with laughter.

"Monkey yourself. Did you ever hear a monkey talk?"

"He looks like one."

"I've run a steamship for forty years and I never struck anything like that. How's the wind, quartermaster?" said the captain.

"East an' nor'east, sir."

"South by southwest," croaked the kid.

"Who's running this boat, anyhow?"

"I am," sang out the kid.

"Wait till I get a gun and I'll see whether you are," exclaimed the captain.

But by the time Shorty Junior came down and disappeared into the cabin, the captain hadn't come back.

"Say, Shorty, what's the reason we can't give a performance on deck?" asked one of the minstrels, after they had got over their seasickness.

"Don't yer t'ink der boat rolls ter much?" asked the kid.

"No."

"Den I'se willin'."

"Splendid! I'd love to see it," said the captain, when he was spoken to.

The minstrels brought out stools and arranged them in a half-circle, and the passengers ranged themselves in line to witness the performance.

"Now then, we'll have the opening chorus," said the middle man.

But they didn't have it, for just then the vessel gave a lurch and the next moment minstrels, instruments and all, were struggling and pitching around in the scuppers.

CHAPTER V.

"Say, try dat, ter settle yer stomjack," said the kid, offering Shanks a bit of fat pork tied on a string.

"Ouw! Go 'way, boy," said Shanks, who was writhing in the agony of sea-sickness.

"Don't be too high-toned in yer stomjack. Jest swaller dis, an' if yer don't like it, I'll pull it up ag'in."

"Oh, Lord! I wish somebody that's—oup—got more strength than me would heave you overboard," gasped Shanks, clapping his hands on his bread-basket and holding his head over the side of the vessel.

"All rite, legs, 'f yer don't gobble it sudden I'll hunt up som' one dat will," laughed Shorty Junior.

"I'll leg you," exclaimed Shanks, jumping up and giving a savage kick at the imp; but just then the vessel gave a sudden lurch, and Shanks flew sideways across the deck, butting an old man in the ribs, knocking him over, and the two rolled together into the scuppers.

"Great goodness! What're you doing, you idiot, you!" roared the old fellow.

"How did I know the darned thing was going to tip over?" demanded Shanks, as he crawled off the top of the old man and let him get up.

"Why couldn't you find some other place in the whole ship to tumble except just on the top of me? Confound you."

"Don't you confound me," said Shanks.

"Yes, I will; and kick you, too. Do you think I'm going to be knocked down and rolled on by every long-legged jackanapes?" exclaimed the old fellow, working himself up into a first-class passion.

"You couldn't kick a two-year-old baby, old fuss and feathers."

"I'll show you that I can kick you," screamed the old fellow, making a rush in Shanks' direction, catching his foot in a coil of rope, turning a somersault, and mopping up the deck with his chin.

"Now, old blowhard, what do you think of yourself?" asked Shanks, when one of the sailors had picked the old fellow up, squatted him in a camp-chair and wiped off his chin.

"I think I'll see you pitched overboard like Jonah before we reach the other side," growled the old duck, picking some splinters out of his chin and glaring viciously at Shanks.

"I knew you had too much chin, and would have to knock off some of it," said Shanks, maliciously, as he went back to his seat on the side and leaned his aching head on the rail.

That evening, just before the music commenced and the dancers came on deck, Shorty Junior slipped around and scattered red pepper all over it, and then perching himself on one of the "bits," he awaited developments.

The captain opened the ball, and a moment later was followed by some dozen couples, whose feet soon stirred up the pepper.

"Such a lovely—kerchew—night for a—kerchew—dance," sneezed the captain to his fair partner.

"Lov—che-ly!" she sneezed back.

"And so—oh chew—romantic by—ah chew—moonlight," snorted the captain.

"Perfectly—yub, yub, yub che—delicious," replied the young lady, glancing up in his face with what she intended to be a coquettish glance, but the effect of which was spoiled by her features suddenly contracting and her sneezing all over him.

Meantime, all the rest of the dancers were as suddenly and mysteriously attacked, and on every side could be seen sneezing, eye-watering and nose-wiping couples, while the band, after a few

moments, catching the contagion nearly sneezed the mouth-pieces off their instruments and the noses off their heads.

"Really—cub—cub—cub—chew—the atmosphere appears—che—full of—kerchew—something strange to-night," blubbered the captain, stopping to wipe his bugle.

"I—I—che—'m 'fraid I've caught an awful—oh, chew—cold in my—che—che—che—head and I'll have to s—s—s—chick—stop dancing," answered the young lady.

"Say, Cap, 'fyer don't stop dis shindig an' get der red pepper swabbed off dis deck yer'll leave me wid a bald-headed band, for dere's four of dem dat's sneezed their scalps loose 'ready, der leader's black in der face an' sneezes holes thro' his music, an' der first fiddler's swallered his false teeth in der las' gasp he giv'," said Shorty, who had tumbled to the red pepper and also had a very good idea of how and by whom it came there.

"Red pepper, sir, and on the deck of my ship; why, I'd put the man in irons that dared to do such a thing!" exclaimed the captain, falling back on his dignity and squaring his shoulders.

"Wouldn't yer wait 'till yer cotched him fust, Cap?" asked Shorty, glancing sideways over to where the kid was perched and shaking himself with laughter.

"This—kerchew—thing shall be—kerchew—investigated!" said the captain, pompously.

"F yer'll tak' my advice, yer'll hav' it swabbed down ter once," said Shorty.

The captain, after sneezing till his ears got loose, took a big tumble to himself, and followed Shorty's suggestion.

"Der fust t'ing yer kno', Chips, dere'll be a burial at sea, an' I t'ink der corpse 'll be 'bout yer size 'f yer keep on putting up such fly jobs as der one yer played ter-night," remarked Shorty, that night as they were retiring.

"Not 'f dey're played fine," snickered the imp, watching his daddy trying to get the bedclothes of his bunk down, but failing, owing to the kid having tacked them to the sides.

"Yer keep on a t'inkin' so—what has got inter dese confounded bed t'ings, I can't mak' head nor tail of dem?" said Shorty, trying first one side and then the other.

"Dey do make der bed up queer on dese steamers," giggled Shorty Junior, with his head buried under the bedclothes.

"F dey don't come up sudden, I'll rip der stuffin' out of 'em, dat's what's der matter with me," growled Shorty, who, in his night-shirt, was holding on to the side of the bunk with one hand and trying to find an opening with the other to crawl into.

"Not much, dad, I wouldn't spile der bed-kivers," advised the youngster.

"Spile yer granny, d'yer s'pose I'm goin' ter hang on 'ere all nite an' wrastle wid a lot of bedclothes?" exclaimed Shorty, and, grabbing them by the top, he gave a yank, and the steamer at that moment taking a heavy roll, the tacks gave way and our little friend found himself standing on his head at the other side of the stateroom, while the kid lay over on his back and fairly screamed with laughter.

"Der quicker yer straitin' dat mug of yern an' leave off grinnin', der better show yer'll have of not gettin' a gran' bounce," growled Shorty, scrambling to his feet and flinging himself into the bed, only to fling himself out again, as one of the tacks still sticking in the bedclothes raked his backbone, while another which he sat down on the point of, tackled him in the rear.

"Whew! Gigantic eclipses, a mule team an' a yaller dog under der waggin, what's dat?" bawled Shorty, feeling the wounded places tenderly.

"What's der racket now, dad? D'yer drop on ter somfin' hot?"

"So cussed hot dat 'fi thort dat yer had a finger inter der pie I'd mak' yer t'ink yer'd been kicked over Niagara Falls by a mule!" said Shorty, as he got on his feet and spent the next ten minutes investigating the cause of the late excitement, and when he came across the tacks he simply smiled a ghastly smile, and went for the kid bald-headed and bare-handed, till the captain came to the conclusion some wild animal had broken loose in the hold, and sent men down with lanterns to see where the screams came from,

"Play it on der ol' man, will yer?" demanded Shorty, as he finally dropped him and let him crawl into bed.

"Geeswickilum's! But yer can strike out from der shoulder every pop," sobbed the kid.

"Say, Chips, jest yer mind when yer pick up der ol' man for a flat yer fishin' in hot water for a fluke dat's been dere himself an' kno's der ropes; I don't care two sojer buttons 'bout yer puttin' up jobs an' startin' rackets on oder snoozers, 'cause dat used ter be one of my best grips, but yer better drop der ol' man 'ere lik' yer would a hot coal, for I'm ter fly for yer jest yet," exclaimed Shorty, as he picked the rest of the tacks out of his bed-clothing and turned in for a snooze.

"Fi don't, dad, yer can stuff me inter a bologna sassige-skin, an' sell me for dorg feed," mumbled his son, as he rubbed the smarting places with both hands and wished he only had a half a dozen more that he could use for the same purpose.

Shorty Junior kept very quiet after this and a day or two later they struck Liverpool, much to the joy of all hands, for, although the voyage had been a short one, still none of the passengers felt themselves safe a moment from the kid's practical jokes.

"Dis I 'spect is der only place dey make a pool on a feller's liver," coddled Shorty, as they steamed up the river.

Those around him smiled heartily at the joke, and Shanks fanned his ear with his hat, and said:

"I guss your liver must be out of order to get off such a weak affair as that."

"Week 'fairs! Yer didn't 'spect a Sunday joke, d'yer?" asked Shorty, while a comical grin stole over his funny old face.

Reaching the wharf, all was excitement and bustle, and our

little party were soon busy superintending the getting of their stock and traps once more on terra firma.

"Be them ere donkeys coming off?" asked a longshoreman, who was helping them to unload.

"You bet dey are, but you'll hav' ter handle dem same as dey was a keg of gunpowder," said Shorty Junior.

"Why, I'll pick one of them up hunder heach harm hand carry them hon shore," laughed the big, strapping longshoreman, with a grin.

But he had entirely changed his mind five minutes later as he crawled out of the hold holding one of his ears that had been nearly kicked off, and with his whole body patch-worked over with black and blue bruises.

"Blast my bleedin' lungs hif hi don't believe that them there hanimals hare hinfernally hinhabited!" he roared.

"What's ther trouble, Tom?" asked one of his companions.

"Nothing honly hive been talking hand shaking 'ands with two devils," he replied.

Shorty came forward and explained matters, and the other readily consented to take his place and help unload the mules.

A sling was lowered, and the first jerked out of the hold and landed as quietly as a lamb on deck.

"Now, then, landsman, take a reef in that headtackle of his. Pull up yer anchor and sail him ashore," said an old sailor, impatiently.

The longshoreman grabbed the halter and started, but Mr. Mule refused to budge.

When he did come forward he came forward with a rush, and the man fell flat on his face, skinned his nose, and was trampled on.

Just as he reached the edge of the pier he balked again.

"Why don't you giv' im a hand, Jack, and twist his tail?" asked the kid, who saw fun ahead.

"Great marlinspikes, I'll twist it off him if you say so," exclaimed Jack, and starting forward with a run, he grabbed the mule by the tail and commenced twisting it.

He didn't twist long, for two seconds after he had given the first wrench he was flying over the edge of the pier into the river. Then the mule snatched the longshoreman by the slack of the breeches and shook him, while Shorty, Shanks and the kid roared with laughter over the ridiculous scene.

CHAPTER VI.

"Now, den, dad, if yer ready to git up an' git, let's git," said Shorty Junior, after they had seen the other trick mule and Buster safely landed.

"Where are we going to hang out at?" asked Shanks, picking up with difficulty a valise, a hat-box, two umbrellas, a satchel, a shawl and an overcoat.

"Well, I've got a purty sure t'ing on wher' we're goin' ter 'ventually, but fur der present, we'll histe in our chuck at der Albion."

"Al, Tom, Jim or Jehu, even if it's a demijohn I don't care," said Shanks, moving off like a camel loaded to cross the desert.

The opening performance of the Yankee Boy's Circus was a great success; the tent was packed and hundreds could not get admittance.

"Struck it again like a prize in a Havana lottery," said Shanks, as he looked in for a moment from the other tent.

"Now, den, ter show dem what Yankee boys can do," said Shorty Junior, as he dashed into the ring on Buster, followed by his gay and glittering cavalcade.

Everything passed off lively. Buster stood on his hind legs and his good behavior, and did splendidly.

That evening when the audience broke up there was but one opinion about the performance, and that was that it was a tip-top affair from first to last, the minstrel arrangements taking hugely with the people.

"Mebbe dere's some of yer Liverpool boys dat kno's how ter ride?" said the kid, as dressed in a clown's rig he followed the trick mule around.

There were fifty in the audience could ride, and the kid selected, giving the preference to an old Yorkshire farmer, who pulled off his coat and sailed into the ring with the remark:

"Hoots man, do you s'pose I h'arn't hable to ride ha donkey?"

"Yer can just pick up a couple of hundred of der nastiest dollars ever yer scratched, if yer get 'im roun' der ring three times," said Shorty Junior.

The Yorkshire man made a bold effort, throwing himself flat upon that mule, clasping the mule around the neck with his arms.

"Now scoot!" exclaimed the kid, clapping his hands.

There was a division of opinion as to whether the Yorkshire man struck on his chin or back of his neck first, but when he had been picked up and fanned into consciousness, he said that he thought he would rather plow forty acres than ride one mule.

"Mebbe dere's somebody else wants ter pick up a few hundred Yankee dollars," grinned Shorty Junior, looking around.

The next applicant for wealth was a brawny coal-heaver, who came into the ring to pick up the donkey under his arm, if he didn't like him.

The first place that the man was struck was under the spot where his vest buttons. The next was almost where his pants buttoned, and this time he smelt sawdust.

He was elevated and asked to try it again:

He did, but he wished he hadn't, as he picked himself up from among the sawdust, with torn clothing, a skinned face and a very poor opinion of his riding powers.

"Now's der time ter sail in and win der sugar!" sang out Shorty Junior.

There were several applicants, all of which retired after being pitched over the donkey's head and kicked into spots.

"Now, den, I'se got a hoss 'ere dat come fresh from der plains of Mexico, and der ham dat freezes on ter him onc'd roun' dis ring kin scoop in five hundred Yankee dollars.

Buster looked quiet and tractable enough and the liberal offer spurred a dozen on to win wealth and fame, but after the first man had been elevated till his head struck the top of the tent and came down with a dull thud, a sprained shoulder and all the enthusiasm knocked out of him, the rest weakened and weren't on the ride so much as formerly.

The minstrel show took like hot cakes, and a whirlwind of applause greeted each actor's performance. Shorty and Shorty Junior come out immense in a new English piece, and were received with roars of laughter.

All in all, the performance was splendid, and the audience that had packed the immense tent departed well pleased with their evening's entertainment.

"Fust blood for der Yankee boy," said the kid, as they drove back to the hotel after the circus was over.

"A big thing; more English pounds, shilling and pence in the treasury than I ever expected to see," replied Shanks.

"Tain't bad for a starter, and, if we kin only keep our ends up, we'll mak' a strike dead sure," chimed in Shorty.

"What's all dis 'bout a shootin' match at Wimbleton?" asked the kid, a few moments later.

"Oh, dat's der bigbug match wher' all der park shots let 'emselves loose."

"Kin a feller git a show for his white alley?" asked the kid.

"Why, yer ain't thinking 'bout sportin', be yer?" said his dad.

"You shoot! Oh, carry me out and bury me decently," chimed in Shanks.

"Mebbe yer t'ink I ain't a shootist," said the kid.

"Yer couldn't hit a barn door."

"Or the side of a house," said Shanks.

"All rite. Yer keep on t'inking so, but if dere's any show I'se goin' ter shoot! D'yer hear my gentle voice?"

"Guess yer sick, boy, ter talk 'bout shootin' 'gainst dem boss shooters."

"Take a tumble and don't make a goose of yourself," said Shanks.

Arriving at the hotel they burnt some segars, and then started for their rooms which were separated by a door from Shanks' room.

"I t'ink, dad, I'll giv' 'im a sprinkle," grinned the imp, climbing out of bed and filling an immense syringe.

"I t'ink dat der fust t'ing yer kno' yer don't kno' nuffin'," said his paternal.

"Chalk yer chin, ol' un," chirped the imp, as he climbed up and shot the syringe full of water over Shanks, and through the transom over the door.

"Here, there; stop those things!" screamed Shanks, hopping up in bed.

The kid allowed him to get settled and quieted down, before he gave him the second syringe full.

"Great water tanks! Something leaks around here!" exclaimed Shanks, as the cold water played over him.

It took considerable time to get him in bed again, and he was just closing his eyes, when Shorty Junior let fly again, and he sprang out on the floor with a bound, exclaiming:

"I'll be hanged if I'm going to sleep under a shower bath to please the whole English nation!"

The landlord, two bell-boys, four waiters and three chambermaids finally quieted him down and changed his wet bed-clothing.

"You know this thing is played out, and I ain't no sauney to put up with it," said Shanks, as he got ready to crawl in between the sheets.

He was dozing off, when Shorty Junior shot his ear full of water.

"Darn this hotel; I'd rather sleep on the sidewalk!" exclaimed Shanks, bouncing out of bed and skirmishing around the room.

"See here, landlord, ain't you got a drier room than this? Why you might as well have me under a pump," he demanded, on the man of the house coming up.

"Very singular," said the landlord.

"Singular or not, I ain't goin' to be played on by a hose," replied Shanks.

"You? You—must be mistaken, for—"

Just then Shorty Junior caught him under the ear with a stream, and he dodged out of the room and emptied his ear in a hurry.

The next day the kid went out and entered for the rifle match.

"Dere's one t'ing 'bout it, I can git licked, but's goin' ter tak' a better shooter dan I'se seed," said Shorty Junior.

"Oh! You're a fool to try it," remarked Shanks.

"Don't mak' de crowd look sick, Chips," said his dad.

"Dat ain't my style; 'fi can't shoot I'll squeal, but if ye's got any spare stamps for ter stick up, put dem on dis chicken 'gainst der field."

"I'll be darned, if I don't," said Shanks.

The day following, Shorty Junior, Shorty and Shanks took the train for Wimbleton, where the match was to be shot.

"What kind of a rifle are you goin' ter use?" inquired his dad.

"Yankee gun and Yankee boy to use it."

Bang! went the first gun as they came up on the range.

"How's der pool selling?" asked Shorty Junior, as he picked up an American rifle and ran his eye along the barrel.

"Your turn, sir," sang out the usher a few minutes afterward.

Shorty Junior came to the scratch smiling, threw himself on his back and taking his rifle over his knee let fly, with hardly a moment's aim.

"Bull's-eye!" shouted the crowd.
 "Hit 'em again!" shouted Shorty.
 "I'll bet five to one on America!" exclaimed Shanks, shaking a fist full of bills under their noses.
 "Bull's-eye!" marked the scorer, on Shorty Junior's second shot.
 "Ten to one against the field!" shouted Shanks.
 "Bull's-eye!" marked the scorer, and the crowd commenced to open their eyes, while Shanks and Shorty danced around picking up bets to the right and left.
 "Stick yer stamps up, dad; dere sure as mud," grinned the kid, as he cleaned his rifle.
 "Bull's-eye for that Hamerican," said an Englishman, as Shorty's rifle cracked.
 "Oh, no, guess not; only I've got all the money around me to bet on that chicken," said Shanks, enthusiastically.
 "Sock it ter 'em, Chips, an' I'll back yer ter de last nickel," said Shorty.
 "Dad, keep cool and lemme be! I'se goin' ter shoot dis t'ing thro' for der sake of der oder side of der water," and he put himself in position, leveled his rifle, and the next minute his weapon cracked.
 "Hanother bull's-eye for the Hamerican!" exclaimed a spectator.
 "Dat ain't nuffin'," said the kid, as he looked up.
 "I'll bet that he wins the badge spite of you," said Shanks.
 "And 'ere's der money ter back it," said Shorty.
 The others fired, and the kid sat quietly cleaning his rifle and fixing his sights.
 "Bull's-eye!" followed almost every shot made by a tall Scotchman.
 "Who leads?"
 "Who's ahead?"
 "How's the score?" shouted the crowd.
 Shorty Junior and the Scotchman were found to be a tie.
 "Hoots, man; I ain't going to shoot against that thing, am I?" asked the sawnee, as he looked down contemptuously at the kid.
 "Two to one on the Scotchman," said someone.
 "I'm taking all that kind of bets," spoke up Shanks, promptly.
 The Scotchman took a long deliberate aim and fired, and when the puff of smoke had dropped away it was found he had made a bull's-eye, and the crowd cheered.
 "Now, den, I t'ink I'll plug it," remarked the kid, putting himself in position and blazing away.
 "Bull's-eye."
 The Scotchman shot and made a center.
 Shorty fired, and the crowd yelled and cheered as another bull's-eye marked the result.
 The last shot was now to be fired, and everything hung upon it.
 "Brace up, little one, and sock her home," said Shanks, encouragingly.
 "Shoot, if yer ever did, Chips," whispered his dad.
 The Scotchman laid himself flat on the ground, took a long, steady aim and fired, and the scorer sang out a center.
 "Now, den, dis is wher' I licks 'im, and scoops in der sugar," grinned the little imp, dousing himself on the grass and letting fly.
 "A bull's-eye, and the winner!" exclaimed the scorer.
 "Let's give him a hip, hip, hurrah and a tigah!" shouted Shanks, and the crowd joined in and cheered the little runt.
 "Oh, guess dere's a feller now and den dat kin shoot wid dese fellows; and 'cause dey're Johnny Bulls, dey mustn't t'ink dat dey're got a patent rite on all der bull's-eyes," observed Shorty Junior, as he lay down his rifle and joined the party.
 Then followed the presentation of the championship badge, which the kid received and said:
 "I feel t'anks all over my body, but I kin only speak dem out of my mouth. I thort dat if you'd giv' a Yankee boy haf a show he'd com' in purty near square, but I didn't spect ter waltz away wid dese fellers."
 That night the circus was packed closer than ever.
 Shorty Junior's shooting racket had found its way into the evening papers, and his appearance was the signal for uproarious applause.
 "Say, do you want to sell that camel?" bawled out one of the audience.
 "Yes, come in and sample him," replied the kid.
 The man was coming in when Buster kicked his eyes, ears and mouth full of sawdust and dirt, and he retired in disgust.
 "Is dat all yer goin' ter take?" asked the kid.
 "Hi 'ad henough," said the man, as he climbed back to his place.
 "I say and I want yer ter hear my gentle voice warble, dat dere ain't nuffin' goin' dat's goin' ter run dis show inter der ground."
 "Yer rite dere, kid," said his dad.
 "Hand over your money or I'll spill blood!" exclaimed a man, and three market men jumped out in front of them as they were strolling homeward.
 "Guess yer must tak' us for a snide gang, but dat's wher' yer gettin' fooled," said the kid, diving into his pocket, pulling out and letting blaze with his little shooting-iron.
 At the same moment Shorty and Shanks leaped forward and snatched the other robbers by the throat.
 "Stick ter 'im, dad, till I get a plug inter 'im," sang out the kid.
 "Help, here!" shouted Shanks, who was wrestling with the biggest and liveliest of the highwaymen.
 "I'se dere," cried Shorty Junior, trotting over and rapping the highwayman over the knuckles with his pistol butt till he let go.
 "I'se got my huckleberry squeezed," said Shorty, who had his man down and was resting on him.
 The party were bagged and lugged off to a police station.
 "Goodness me, you don't mean to say you captured them?" said the police captain.
 "Dat's just der kind of eggplants we are," said Shorty Junior.

"Boy, I ain't talking to you."
 "Ain't yer? Well, I guess you mite as well tak' a frill out of yer backbone an' com' ter time."
 "Come to what?"
 "Ter time. I ain't no slouch, and I don't want to be picked up for one," said the kid.
 "But I'm a captain of police."
 "Why, a feller'd t'ink yer was der President of der United States ter hear yer talk," said Shorty Junior.
 The cop took a gigantic tumble and buttoned up his mouth.
 The next day wound up the week in Liverpool of the Yankee Boy's Circus, and Shorty gave the word to pull up stakes and strike out for London.
 A special train was provided, but there was lots of fun before the stock could be loaded.
 "Help that mule up into the car," said one of the railroad employes, as he pulled and tugged at the halter.
 The unfortunate greenhorn tried to shove the mule up, but desisted, after he had been kicked through the atmosphere about seventeen feet.
 "Why didn't you pick 'im hup?" said a man.
 "Pick him hup yerself."
 "Shoot it."
 "Take a spin."
 "Sail around the block."
 "Take a swim, you're too fresh."
 "Pipe down and give us a rest."
 "Roll out and tak' in der swell," grinned the imp.
 "Say, Shorty, how 'bout that hurra yer got las' nite?" sang out a youngster.
 "Oh, dat's all rite; dem snoozers is only fit to be clam diggers."
 "Wanted to shoot you?"
 "Pshaw! Dat ain't nuffin'; dem coons wouldn't shoot a sick cat, and den I'se rite on der pull and shoot myself."
 "Now den le's catch dis train," said Shorty.
 "There's another train goes out and runs ahead of this one," said Shanks.
 "Well, I'se a bettin' dere ain't," said the kid, and stepping out he oiled the other track.
 "Toot, toot," screamed one engine, pulling out.
 "Toot, toot," blew the other one, as it started.
 The tracks ran parallel, and the other engine darted out till she struck the oiled place, when the wheels suddenly spun around without her making any headway, while Shorty's train shot ahead, leaving the other behind.
 "More steam," shouted the engineer, as he piled the wood into the furnace.
 The wheels slipped around on the greased rails, and Shorty's train dashed ahead.
 "Oh, no, guess not, dat ain't goin' ter be der fust train," grinned the kid.
 The engineer was half an hour before he found out about it, and by that time the kid was thirty miles away.
 "Fare, gentlemen," said the conductor.
 "Yee-up der mos' of us is blonds," chirruped the kid.
 "But I want your money," said the conductor.
 "Oh, oh, why didn't you say so?" said Shorty Junior, as he passed up the stamps.
 There was quite a turnout at the station to meet them, and the boys gave them three times three before they quit.
 "Yes, fellows, we're 'ere an' we're goin' ter stick 'ere," said Shorty.

CHAPTER VII.

"London! Now, den, pick up yer ears, turn out yer toes and let dem see what yer kin do for yer country," said Shorty Junior.
 "Yes, dis is der time dat knocks," chimed in his dad.
 "An' I'se der boy ter knock it," said Shorty Junior, as he dropped some lighted fire-crackers into an old gentleman's pocket.
 "Here! See 'ere!" said the man, jabbing his hand down into his pocket, hauling it out, and ramming it into his mouth.
 "What 'pears ter be der racket?" asked the kid.
 "Jupiter and Mars, I'm on fire!" exclaimed the man.
 "Why don't yer holler, den?" asked Chips.
 "Heavens and earth, ain't I hollering?" bawled the man, excitedly.
 It took the proprietor of the hotel, two waiters, and several of the guests to quiet the old man down.
 "Say, yer better take a tumble, Chips, or der'll be a funeral, and I t'ink dat I kno's wher' der corpse 'll com' from," said Shorty.
 "And I don't care 'bout being a chief mourner," said Shanks.
 "Say, dad, s'pose we pipe off der House of Parliament ter-day," said Shorty Junior.
 "All rite, I'm willin'," said his paternal.
 They procured tickets and were admitted after sugaring half a dozen official hands.
 After looking around and taking in all the place, and listening to the speeches, the kid suddenly sang out:
 "Cheese dat."
 The member who was speaking, stopped short and glanced around, but could see nobody, as Shorty Junior had dodged down behind the gallery.
 "Oh, pshaw! What a fluke yer makin' of yerself," sang out Shorty Junior, as the man continued with his speech.
 "Order! Order, there!" sang out one of the members.

"Stick out yer ears and pull down yer vest," exclaimed Shorty Junior.

Considerable excitement followed this remark, and the master-at-arms and his assistant flitted around the visitors' gallery in a vain attempt to find out the party.

"Now den, dad, don't yer grin," said the kid, as he cut an orange in two and let it fly, hitting the bald-headed speaker fair on the head.

There was a grand splurge.

"Am I to be insulted, abused and brow-beaten in this manner?" yelled the member.

The officers rushed here and there, but Shorty Junior dodged under the seats and was nowhere to be found.

"I will again continue my argument—"

Just then the other half of the orange hit him in the ear, and he took a tumble and sat down, saying:

"Things 'as come to h'a pretty pass when h'a member can't speak 'is mind h'even h'if 'e does belong to the h'opposition party 'e h'oughtn't to be h'insulted."

"Oh, jerk us a breeze!" said Shorty Junior.

"Der fust t'ing yer kno' dere'll be a gran' bouncin' match, and yer'll be der victim," said his dad in a whisper.

"I'se takin' all der risk of dem t'ings," grinned the kid, and he pegged another of the members on top of the head with half an apple.

"Here, here! I won't put up with this thing!" exclaimed the man jumping up and gesticulating wildly.

"Oh, squat and hol' yer breff," said the kid.

But the man wouldn't squat worth a cent; he threw his arms round, shouted and kicked up things generally.

"What's der matter? Guess yer got der jim-jams," sang out Shorty Junior, and the member grew wilder than ever and wanted to know if his county was to be insulted in this manner.

"Oh, yer county's snide!" said Shorty Junior.

"As a member I—"

"Oh, swim out, and don't blow so hard," said the kid, letting fly the other half of the apple, and hitting him on the ear again.

"Britannia, darnation!" yelled the member, and he scooted out, while Shorty Junior and his companions indulged in a broad grin.

"Now den, dad, les' polka 'long and scoop in dat British Mu-

seum biz," said the kid.

They got a hack at the door and Shorty Junior put up a job on the driver by prodding him with an immense pin which kept the cabby in a state of agony.

The museum was well worth seeing, but the kid no sooner entered it than he thought of a racket, and stepping behind one of the statues of a knight in full armor, he waited 'till a countryman came along.

"Now, that's King H'edward h'and—"

"Yer a liar," said the kid; and the countryman jumped back astonished.

"Who yer lookin' at?"

"Gracious!" exclaimed the countryman, with open eyes and mouth.

"What yer tak' me for anyhow?" asked Shorty Junior, and the man backed away with a frightened expression on his face.

"Say, ole hop-and-go-fetch-it—what yer starin' at?" asked the imp, of an old gouty fellow who limped along.

"Great admirals! Why it spoke!" exclaimed the old codger, bouncing his eyes open, as if they were set on springs.

Shorty and Shanks snickered all over their clothes.

"Come now, paddle 'long and don't stan' dere like a sun-struck monkey," said the kid, from his place of concealment.

"Why, this is most hextraordinary."

"How's yer grandmother?" asked Shorty Junior.

"Goodness save me!"

"Better wipe off yer chin and shake dat white hat, 'cause dey's called in," said Shorty Junior.

"This is the most wonderful thing I ever came across," said the man, with a puzzled expression on his countenance.

"Oh, pshaw! Swim out and get a mouthful of salt water, yer so fresh yer won't keep."

"I declare it's almost supernatural."

"I'll supernatural yer 'longside der snoot 'f yer don't skip."

"Speaks just the same as if he was alive."

"Wouldn't yer take a tumble if a house fell on yer?" asked Shorty Junior, and taking advantage of the man's face being turned away, he pasted him in the chops with a sucked orange.

"Merciful goodness! I must speak to the proprietor!" exclaimed the man, as he wiped his ear out.

He moved away as fast as his lame leg would allow him, and a stout, round-faced old lady took his place.

"Who yer gapin' at?" asked Shorty Junior.

"Great 'eavens!" she cried, starting back.

"We don't want any snoozers loafin' 'roun' 'ere!"

"Sakes of me!"

"Tak' a reef in yer bustle, and polka 'long," said Shorty Junior.

"Well, I do declare!"

"Oh, spin out!"

Then the old lady got mad, and sailed away on her ear, and the kid and Shorty roared over the racket.

Having seen the things, they left the show and took their way out through the city to the hotel.

CHAPTER VIII.

On their retiring to their rooms they turned in at once, and soon were sound asleep, with the exception of the kid, who lay quietly devising some fresh racket.

A few minutes later the regular breathing of the sleepers showed they were in the "land of nod," the kid glided softly from his bed, and taking a paper of pins from off the bureau, stole over to where Shanks had thrown his clothes upon a chair, and quietly pinned the knees of his pants and the elbows of his coat together so that he could get neither arms or legs through them. The middle of his socks were fastened in the same manner, and having dropped a piece of soap into the heel of each boot, the imp retired with a grin on his face like a slice out of a muskmelon.

"Gosh, but dere'll be fun in dis room to-morrow mornin', but I t'ink der safest place for dis huckleberry 'll be 'bout a thousand miles away when der racket com's off. I t'ink I see dad shaking hisself all over 'till he's blue in der face from laffin', and Shanks madder than a cat that's had her tail bobbed," snickered the kid, and he hid his head under the bedclothes and went off into paroxysms of laughter.

"What's der matter wid yer? Got a fit?" asked his daddy, waking up as he felt the bed shaking under him.

"F-i-t, nu-thin'. What'd yer want ter wake a feller up when he's snoozin'," asked Shorty Junior, drowsily.

"Chips, dat's too thin."

"Well, I don't want yer to do it again; 'thout yer want me fer sumthin'."

"See 'ere, shaver, when I'se woke up by havin' der hull bed shakin' under me like an earthquake, an' when I gets my ears an' peepers open an' finds yer wid yer hed under der clothes, giggling same as yar'd bust, I tumbles ter somfin', and yer can't play no snoozin' game on ter me," replied his paternal, knowingly.

"Guess I must have had der nite horse," said the kid.

"Well, yer kin jest have a hull circus full of nite hosses, but I want yer ter keep dem down at der circus, an' not fetch dem ter bed wid yer."

"All rite, don't chaw all nite; I want ter git ter sleep," said the hopeful, turning over on his side.

"Been puttin' up another racket, hey?" asked Shorty, punching him in the ribs with his elbow.

The kid saw that the old man had been fly enough to drop on something snide having been put up, and he feared that he would squeal if he didn't give it away; still with his criss-cross temperament, he replied:

"Gues yer got rackets on der brain, ain't you?"

"I'll racket yer ober der ears 'f yer've been playin' any on me," warned his dad.

Then the kid up and told the old man about what he had done, and also his plans for the morrow morning, and Shorty stuffed the bed-clothes in his mouth and writhed all over the bed in convulsions of laughter, ending by promising secrecy and all the assistance in his power.

All this conversation and laughter having been carried on in whispers and subdued grinning, poor Shanks knew nothing of it, and slept along the sleep of the just and innocent, and shortly after the whole party fell asleep.

Next morning the kid was up before sunrise, and waking his dad, who lay in bed, though undressed, so as not to awake suspicions, he slipped downstairs and had a couple of buckets of cold water carried up to the door, saying he wished to take a bath before breakfast. Then waiting till the waiter was well out of ear-shot, he suddenly slammed open the door and shouted:

"Turn out 'ere! Turn out lively, or yer'll all be burned ter death!"

"Wha—Holy Moses!" exclaimed Shanks, popping up in bed like a jumping-jack, and trying for a second to realize his danger.

"Hurry up, Shanks! Hurry up, for heaven's sake!" exclaimed Shorty, piling into his clothes like mad.

"Der hull lower floor's cleared out, and she's a raging up de stairs!" shouted the kid.

"Where's my clothes?" shrieked Shanks, springing out of bed and into the middle of the floor, and seizing his pants with trembling hands, tried to ram his legs through them.

"Blazing Rome! What ails them?" he yelled, as his feet stuck fast in the middle of the legs, and he pulled till his eyes bulged out of his head, and the veins in his arms stood out like whip-cords. No use, the pins held bravely, and with a howl of anguish he snatched on his coat, all the time urged and spurred to greater speed by Shorty and the kid, and with the prospect of death staring him square in the face.

"What's this!" he screamed, as his arm stuck fast at the elbow.

"More devilish witchery."

"Oh, darn it! Neber mind der duds, or yer'll be a cinder 'fore yer kno'!" bawled the kid.

"Almighty fly-traps! I can't go this way, can I?" cried Shanks.

"Com' along! Don't stand dere pokin', " advised Shorty, while he turned his back so that they couldn't see him grin.

"Poking fire and brimstone! I've nearly burst a blood-vessel in trying to get my legs and arms through these cursed clothes!" screamed Shanks, once more diving for his pants, jabbing one leg into them half way and hopping around the room like a one-legged rooster.

"Hurry! Hurry! If yer value yer life, yer better skin it," advised Shorty, bustling around and tossing things about as if he was packing up.

"I'se off, dad, I don't want ter be toasted," exclaimed the kid, in a frightened tone of voice.

"Merciful stars! Where's my boots and I'll wrap a bed-quilt round me," shouted Shanks, from whom the perspiration was dripping, and who fancied he could almost hear the roar of the approaching flames.

"Dere's yer butes ober dere, now git inter dem an 'outer 'ere," pleaded Shorty.

Shanks crossed the room in two skips and snatching up the boots tried to haul them on like lightning, but when his toes struck the stocking Shorty had rammed into the toe of it and his heel at the same moment came down on the nasty, slippery soap, a desperate look crept into his eyes and he hauled it off and slung it through the window.

"Confound it, you've gone back on me, too."

"I'se stuck ter yer, pard, till der las' minit, but I feels der floor gettin' hot under me. I t'ink it's time ter get up and crawl," said Shorty.

"Oh, don't go, please!" implored Shanks, trying in every way to get his arms through his coat.

"I wouldn't fi could help it; but yer so terribly slow, an' won't git inter yer duds."

"Great howling catamounts! Don't you see me tearing myself to pieces trying to get them on?" fairly cried Shanks.

"Der engines is com', an' der big staircase is blazin' fine," shouted Shorty Junior, putting his head in the door.

"Dat let's me out," exclaimed Shorty, rushing for the door.

"Lord, what a fix," cried Shanks, and snatching a bed-quilt off the bed, he started, and had just reached the door when he heard a hoarse voice say:

"Fire! Fire!" and the next moment he was doused from head to foot with the two buckets of water; but he scampered on, for was it not life and death? Springing down three steps at a time, leaving a trail of water and profanity behind him, he burst into the office, glared around and gasped:

"Where is it?"

"Where is what?" demanded the clerk, who felt sure he had got hold of a lunatic.

"Th—the fire!" stammered Shanks, glancing around and seeing no signs of any fire or of there having been any fire.

"The only fire I know of is that in the kitchen range," replied the clerk.

"Then there is no blazing staircases, pumping engines, burning corridors, shouting firemen, burnt bodies, fainting women, hurry, scurry, excitement, cinders, charred beams, tottering walls, and all that sort of thing?" he demanded.

The clerk beckoned a bell-boy and was about sending him out for a policeman, when Shanks turned away sorrowfully and said:

"Oh, I see, I've been sold!" and he wound his bed-quilt around him with the dignity of an Indian chief, and stalked up the stairs, leaving the clerk, guests and waiters watching him open-mouthed.

Reaching the top of the stairs his mood suddenly changed and grew excited and angry, and he muttered as he remembered all he had passed through:

"If I find a thing suspicious about these clothes of mine, I'll break that young villain's neck."

But Shorty Junior was far too cute a shaver to let himself be trapped in that manner, and after Shanks had started downstairs he slipped into the room and in two seconds had all the pins and things out and was downstairs close enough after Shanks to witness and enjoy the denouement.

Shanks flung the room door open with a violence that threatened to burst it off its hinges, and strode across the floor like a Bowery tragedian in some blood-and-thunder play; snatching up his pants he inserted his leg and with a frown that would sour milk, pulled gently, his foot slipping through without meeting any obstacle.

"Well, I'm everlasting and teefotally darned, if that don't beat the Dutch!" he exclaimed, as he inserted his other foot and drew his pants on with perfect ease.

He picked up articles, looked at them suspiciously and angrily for a moment, but as they went on in their usual manner, his look would change to one of astonishment, but when he came to the coat, that capped the climax. Shorty and Shorty Junior had meantime returned to the room and were enjoying his perplexity, listening with suppressed laughter to his muttered expressions of astonishment, but as yet had said not a word; but as Shanks picked the coat off the floor, where he had thrown and danced on it in his rage, he raised it with a stern look, lips compressed, eyes like flint and fingers fairly itching for some excuse to break forth and tear the troublesome garment into fragments.

"Say, Shanks, what was der reason yer wouldn't put som' togs on 'fore you went downstairs; yer needn't hav' waited ter mak' a swell toilet, but yer mite hav' made yerself look a little less lik' dat big Injin, Crazy Horse," said Shorty, quietly.

"Reason! Great gunpowder plots! I'll show you why: now watch this coat how my arms will stick, and forty oxen wouldn't pull them through!" he shouted, only too glad to find an escape-valve for his impotent rage.

He placed his hand in the opening of the sleeve and shot it down as if it had been a thunder-bolt bringing it out at the wrist, as if it had been greased.

"Well, I don't see much ter cuss an' rage an' fume 'bout dat," said Shorty, looking out of the window so that Shanks should not see the broad grin that crossed his face.

"Slicker than soft-soap," suggested the kid. "Guess yer must hav' been in der army ter mak' it work dat way."

"Do I look as if I was drunk?" asked Shanks, with a more than queer look on his good old face.

"Well, not 'zactly drunk, but yer've been actin' sort of queer yer kno' all der mornin'," said Shorty.

"Same as yer had a bug in yer ear, a live wasp in yer pants pocket, and an 'tack of der jim-jams thrown in," chimed in the kid.

"Oh, you shut up or I'll pulverize you and sell you for tooth-powder!" threatened Shanks.

"Der polls at dis ballot-box of a mouf of mine don't close 'till I goes ter snooze," replied the kid.

"Then I'll padlock them."

"Ke-no!", said the kid, wittily.

"Then it must be there's something wrong up here," moaned Shanks, sadly, tapping his forehead significantly.

"Feel all rite now, don't yer?" asked Shorty.

"Sorter bewildered."

"Well, I was sorter scared 'self."

"What made you come rushing in here shouting, 'turn out,' for?" demanded Shanks, sternly.

"Cause it was time ter get up, of course," grinned the imp.

"And shouting, 'hurry up! hurry up!'" questioned Shanks, sternly.

"Cause I didn't want yer ter be late ter chuck, 'cause dey got some red-hot muffins," replied Chips, coolly.

"And what did you mean by being burnt to cinders?" asked Shanks, ominously.

"Why, dat dere steak would be burnt ter cinders, of course, and den I know'd it wouldn't be fit ter chaw."

"And those flames that were darting up the stairway?" and his face wore a 'sold-and-got-the-money' look.

"Dose flames, dat was rushin' up der stairway was two of der purtiest chambermaids in der house, an' der porter an' boss. cook was tryin' ter kiss dem, 'count of being mashed on 'em," answered Shorty Junior.

"Y-e-s," said Shanks, reflectively, "but the next time you have any news to communicate to me I wish you'd do it through a telephone and not through a fire trumpet."

"All right, legs, yer tell it and I'll trump it," joked Shorty Junior, and the subject was dropped, the party adjourning to breakfast, where Shanks, much to his annoyance and disgust found himself the target for all eyes to shoot at; look which way he would, he would meet the eyes of the other guests regarding him with a half-pitying, half-frightened expression, while whispers from different parts of the room floated across to him and helped flavor his coffee.

"He's not dangerous, you say?"

"Did he escape from some asylum?"

"Is that little short man his keeper?"

"Tried to set the hotel on fire last night?"

"Oh, the wretch!"

"What an awful desperate eye he's got."

"Looks quiet enough now."

"Wonder they let him in here."

"Very rich, oh!"

"How long has he been bad?"

"Hadn't a stitch on him but an old quilt, saw him myself."

"Yes, and water dripping all off it on the floor, as if he'd jumped into the river."

"They say that short man beats him awful, and ties him with a rope to the bed."

"This is intolerable!" exclaimed Shanks, throwing down his knife and fork.

"Dis is mutton chop," said the kid, cutting off a chunk and bolting it.

"I can stand it no longer; I wouldn't take a thousand dollars a day and stop in this place another twenty-four hours," grated Shanks hoarsely, as he pushed his chair back from the table.

"Ain't goin' ter get nuther 'tack 're yer?" inquired Shorty.

"If I ain't a lunatic now, I'd be one before dinner," replied Shanks, getting up and going out, and nothing would persuade him to remain another minute in the hotel, so they were obliged to pull up stakes and go to another before he would be satisfied.

The circus proved a grand success during the rest of their stay in London and paid like smoke, full houses nightly testifying to their appreciation of the merit of the acting, and the grand scale upon which it had been gotten up regardless of expense. British money flowed into the Yankee boys' treasury like a silver river, and it would have paid them to have remained a month longer there, but their advance agent had made all the arrangements for their final appearance in England to take place at Oxford, and that old city had been billed with gorgeous posters 'till it looked as in the days of yore, when the gay, bright banners of the knights waved in the sunshine.

On the farewell night in London, Shorty Junior made a little gem of a speech, thanking the Londoners for their kind reception and full houses: it was received with rounds of applause, and the audience departed.

"Now den, dad, I'll show yer how I'se got dese fellers of mine trained down ter der tent-strikin' bizness," said the kid, and he gave the order, "Strike and pack tents for the road," and half an hour later there was not a sign of what had been a few moments before such a gay scene, while everything was in the wagons, the horses harnessed and every driver in his place.

"Dere, how's dat for rustlin'; I guess dere ain't anything roun' dese corners goin' ter shake dat inter der background, hey, ol' man?"

"Very good, an' hard ter beat," replied Shorty.

"Very good thing when you want to slip off without payin' your bills," said Shanks.

"Dey kin pack quicker dan yer kin dress," retorted Shorty Junior, and Shanks dried up.

The trip to Oxford was made without incident, and after the payment of a prince's ransom for being allowed to show, they pitched their tents.

CHAPTER IX.

"Well, dad, what yer t'ink of dis place?" asked Shorty Junior of his paternal, the morning of their arrival.

"I t'ink dat they orter turn it inter a graveyard at once't; it's near bein' one anyhow," replied his dad.

"It makes me yawn to look at one of the sleepy-headed people," murmured Shanks.

"Den der only t'ing for us ter do is ter wake 'em up," replied the kid, cheerfully.

"Why, the very dogs are too lazy to chew their bones; see there," said Shanks, pointing to where a big fat cur lay asleep near by.

"Now, yer jes' hold yer bref for forty seconds an' I'll make dat sleepy-hed wake up some of der oder snoozers," chuckled the kid, and slipping inside the hotel for a minute, he secured a good stout piece of twine and an immense brass dinner-bell, and approaching the cur, managed to make it fast to his tail without attracting any attention.

"Now, den, kiyudle, scoot!" exclaimed the kid, stirring the cur up with his foot.

The dog got up slowly, and was stretching himself lazily, when the kid gave him a kick behind that started him down the street kiting, the old bell dangling after and pealing out loud enough to wake the dead.

Half way down the block the cur collided and tangled himself up with two professors, and on their undertaking to remonstrate with him, he snatched a mouthful out of the calf of one, and darting between the legs of the other took a bite, and spilled him into the gutter.

"Oh, I have been bit, bitten, bit!" screamed one of the professors, dancing around on one leg.

"And I also have been lacerated!"

"Hydrophobia!"

"Rabies!"

"We must do something instantly, Professor Sealingum, to prevent the poison spreading."

"Was the dog mad?"

"Frothing mad! I fear we are lost."

"Say, mister, did dat dere dog chaw yer any?" asked the kid, coming up to where they were standing each holding one leg up.

"The canine bit me!" groaned Professor Sealingum.

"Yer sure 't wasn't der dog den?" said Shorty Junior, with a comical look out of the corner of his eyes.

"I mean the dog; oh, do you know of any remedy?"

"And I too am suffering from the fangs of the beast," moaned Professor Mucilage.

"I s'pect he thort dat der quickest way ter git eddicated was ter tak' a bit of both of yer 'long," replied the kid.

"But while we stand here the poison may be working in our veins and help will reach us too late," moaned Sealingum.

"Yer both com' rite 'long wid me ter my room in der hotel 'ere, an' I'll fix yer all rite in the shake of a dog's tail," said the kid, and they followed him limply.

"Goin' ter put up a job on 'em, an' get dem tite, so yer must lay roun' an' giv' us a hand," whispered the kid to his dad, as he led the way upstairs.

"Squat rite down 'ere anywheres," said Chips, on their entering his room.

"Oh, do hurry, please!" whined Mucilage.

"Two benzine smashes, dad, an' mak' dem stiff an' strong," said the kid, as he hustled about, and got them some liniment for to bathe their wounds with.

"Dere, put dose snifters under yer belt, an' rub yer shanks lik' blue blazes wid dat liniment, an' yer'll be able to dance a hornpipe in ten minutes."

"Ah!" ejaculated Professor Sealingum, as he smacked his lips over the last of his drink.

"Hem!" said Professor Mucilage, closing his eyes, in blissful ecstasy.

In a few minutes, the liquor commenced to make them feel good, and they grew quite talkative.

"Ere, sling dese inter yer bread-basket, an' rub away," said Shorty, presenting them with another drink.

"This is a seductive and pleasing drink, but I almost fear it contains alcoholic stimulants," observed Sealingum, as he accepted the glass from Shorty, and downed it.

"Dat'll mak' yer hair curl," said the kid.

"Yes, and their legs, too," whispered Shanks.

"Well, how's der goose hang now?" asked the kid, a few minutes later, as he saw them smiling at everything and everybody.

"I have not studied the habits of that ancient bird myself, but—"

"Oh, cheese it. I mean how's trix?"

"Trix, trix? Oh, an algebraic form, used only—"

"Tumble, tumble; I want ter kno' how d'yer feel as far as yer got?" interrupted the kid.

"Oh, I feel gloriferously, and my learned brother Mucilage feels splendiferously," replied Professor Sealingum, thickly.

"How's yer legs?" asked Shorty.

"All rize," mumbled Mucilage.

"Den le's hay' a walk round. Dad, yer get yer banjo an' pick us off a tune."

Shorty got out his old-time banjo, and taking a seat on top of a trunk, struck up a regular old plantation hoe-down.

"Now, then, le's shuffle," exclaimed the kid, as he waltzed out on the floor and commenced keeping time to the music.

"Canze you danze?" inquired Sealingum of his learned brother, who was shuffling his feet about.

"Yesh," answered the other.

"Sho can I."

"Why don't yer jine in den an' slam dem bug mashers of yers round?" said the kid, and the next minute the two fuddled profes-

sors, dressed in their long gowns and flat caps, were out on the floor dancing like mad.

"Go it, Sealingum," said Shorty.

"Shake yerself, Moosilage," exclaimed the kid.

"Sealing-gum can dance all around the other fellow," remarked Shanks, as he brought the dancers two freshly-mixed punches, which they gulped and struck in again with redoubled vigor.

"Huzza, bully, buzt zim!" exclaimed Sealingum, swinging his arms around and dancing all over the room, while Professor Mucilage bobbed straight up and down in one spot, with a comical tight look all over him.

In the meantime it appears that one of the porters of the college had seen the dog when he bit the professor, and hurrying back, had informed the principal that two of his assistants had been frightfully bitten by a mad dog, and were taken to the Randolph Hotel.

"Mercy me! Two of my assistants bitten by a mad dog!" exclaimed the old principal, and calling three of the professors to him he directed them to leave their classes in charge of some competent person and accompany him at once.

On his way from the college, he called and secured the services of a couple of doctors, and the whole party hastened along fearing they would be too late.

"Where can I find Professors Sealingum and Mucilage? Quick—speak!" demanded the old principal, rushing up to the clerk.

"I don't know them."

"That's the two gents that Shorty took up to his room a while ago, sir," said a waiter.

"Are they alive, do you know, sir?" asked the principal, anxiously.

"Very much alive, judging from the noise they've been making," replied the clerk.

"Suffering so much pain, I suppose," said the principal, and following the waiter upstairs they were shown Shorty's room.

"Gracious! What a strange noise to have around sick persons," observed the principal, as he knocked timidly on the door.

"Run in, jump in, slide in, walk in, crawl in, an' f yer can't get in, throw yer money in!" sang out the kid.

"Yesh, scom zin zand danze!" hiccupped Professor Sealingum.

"Gif us a drink," hiccupped Mucilage, as he tried to kick the ceiling with his heels, just as the door opened and the head principal, followed by the other professors and the two doctors entered and stood aghast at the sight before them.

"Heavens above me! Do my eyes deceive me?" exclaimed the principal, throwing up his hands in holy horror, and the hands of all his party as if worked by a spring, went up at the same time.

"F dey tell yer we're havin' a hunkie ol' time, dey don't lie, hey, Mucilage?" grinned the kid.

"Step rite in an' sling yer feet, ol' crow-scarers an' boy-lickers," chimed in Shorty, playing louder and faster than ever.

"Huaza, ols feller, want a drink?" inquired Mucilage, dancing over and throwing his arms around the principal's neck.

"Why, you are drunk, professor!" shouted the principal, turning to get away.

"Youze a li-hic-ar!" said Mucilage, pulling off the principal's cap and spitting in it.

"Gis me kiss," mumbled Sealingum, trying to hug one of his brother professors, who in trying to get rid of him, caught his foot against a rip in the carpet, and the next moment they were rolling over and over each other on the floor.

"Let go of me, sir; you're a disgrace to the cloth you wear!" exclaimed the head principal, indignantly.

"Whosh a disgrace? I ain't 'raid of youze, Ish can lick youze any day," observed Mucilage, who was growing pugilistic.

"Go away, and remember I shall report your cases to the board for dismissal from the college."

"Youze canhic-go-hic-go-hic-to the-hic-deuce," replied Mucilage, and catching the principal by the nose, he was trying to pull it off when Shanks interfered and separated them, and after a champion chinning match, in which one side chewed the dictionary all to pieces to get out three-story words expressive of his anger and disgust, the other side tacked around the room in an uncertain and crooked manner, sang songs and tried to dance, they were finally put to bed and the others departed in great wrath.

"Jimminy Cripes! But mebbe dose fellers won't get der gran' bounce fer dis racket," said the kid.

"Dey'll catch rats, sure pop," answered his dad.

"S'pose we tak' a spin roun' by der college an' see der b'hoys," suggested the kid.

"All rite, I'se in; dem hams won't get their peepers open 'fore nite," replied his dad, nodding towards the sleeping professors.

"They're anchored fast enough, so let's go," said Shanks, leading the way out.

By representing themselves as intimate friends of Professor Sealingum, they were admitted at once to the grounds, where they were instantly surrounded by a laughing, jesting, coddling crowd of young fellows, who commenced chaffing Shorty and the kid on their size.

"Say, didn't they run short of stuff when you were made?" asked a long-legged boy.

"Yee-up, dey tol' me dat dey had ter use it all on a long-legged ijit of a boy so's folks wouldn't tak' 'im for a baboon an' club 'im ter death," retorted the kid, and the other boys laughed.

"Sharper than a needle, ain't you?" said long-legs.

"Needle-ss to say, I wouldn't hav' ter go to a grindstone ter git ter be as sharp as yer," replied the kid.

"I suppose the branches of the trees grow low in the country you come from and they have to build the people short so they won't knock their brains out," chimed in another.

"Dere's one t'ing certain, we've got der brains ter knock out, an' dat's more den yer kin say on dis side der water," replied the kid.

"Say, don't you fellows belong to that circus?" asked an oldish boy, who was blowing up a foot-ball.

"Yer rite we do, at least dere's der owner and boss of der hull mersheen," said Shorty, pointing to the kid.

"What! That little jigger?"

"He's der biggest actor dat steps inter der ring."

"Oh, bully, see here; we fellows are goin' to skip the wall to-night after the lights are out and make a break for your show. Keep a lot of seats for us, will you?"

"Yer bet I will, fellers, an' der bes' ones in der house," spoke up the kid.

"We'll be there, never fear!" they answered.

"Say, fellers, how's yer gang on playin' foot-ball?" asked the kid, a moment later.

"Oh, we're tough ones to beat," answered the boy who was blowing up the foot-ball.

"How'd yer lik' ter play a Yankee team. I t'ink I kin scare up a crowd 'mong our boys dat'll giv' yer yer hands full," inquired Shorty Junior.

"All right, we're willing, eleven on each side."

"Dat suits me, for der championship Yankee against Johnny Bull."

"When will you play?"

"Ter-morrow or der fust day yer fellers kin get off."

"We have a half-holiday to-morrow; that'll suit us all to pieces."

"Der nex' t'ing is 'bout der groun', wonder wher' we kin tumble ter a spot; I'll put up der sugar for it 'f we can hire it," said the kid.

"Don't worry about that; I know where there's a ground," replied the other boy.

"I spect yer goin' ter captain yer gang, ain't yer?"

"Yes, I'm captain of the crack eleven here, who's going to boss your team?"

"Oh, I s'pose dat little job'll be done by a feller dat looks like me," laughed the kid.

"You!"

"Dat's what's der matter wid der 'Merican eagle."

"Bully, I'm glad of that, 'cause I always like to know who I'm playing against," answered the captain of the college team.

"Well, den, 'till ter-nite, when I'll see yer all at der circus, ta-ta, da-da," grinned the kid, moving off and kissing his hand comically to the boys.

"Dere's nuther box yer've managed ter trap us inter," observed Shorty, as they left the college grounds and struck the street.

"You ought to have had gumption enough in that little bullet-head of yours to know that those fellers practice every day and'll just wax the stuffing out of us," remarked Shanks.

"Dey'll wax nuthin'; dat ain't my style ter git waxed, and I don't t'ink, dad, dat yer or Shanks kin stick yer finger on many times I'se got warmed," replied the kid.

"But ebery one of dese fellers is up ter dere biz," continued Shorty.

"Ah, crawl inter yerself, dad, why yer used ter hav' backbone 'nuff for haf a dozen government mules an' 'ere yer squealin' 'bout a lot of boys beatin' us."

"Not much squeal, kid, yer'll find me dere ter-morrer when yer wants der ol' man."

"And I'll kick these long legs of mine down into stumps but what we'll carry off the chaminoship; we can't afford to let that slide away from us," said Shanks, earnestly.

"Yer shoutin' wisdom when yer chin dat way," replied the kid.

That evening our party on their arrival at the circus, were agreeably disappointed at finding a good, fair house instead of empty benches, as the half dead and alive appearance of the town had led them to expect.

But it wasn't every day that a circus struck Oxford, and here was one, and a Yankee circus at that, and there was a general diving down into old bureau drawers after hidden shillings and half-crowns and a general turnout in the evening that filled the tent comfortably full.

Altogether the show was voted one of the biggest things that ever struck that town, and everybody went home feeling that they had had more than the money's worth of laughter, seen more than their money's worth of brilliant pageantry, and had more than their money's worth of a good time generally.

The balance of the week at Oxford proved a pleasant and financially good one, and it was with regret that the boys pulled up stakes and set off on their long jaunt to Dublin, Ireland, which they reached after a quiet and uneventful journey.

CHAPTER X.

It was evening when Shorty Junior and his party arrived in Dublin, and they were seized upon as legitimate game by the cab drivers and hotel runners.

"Is it the cab with the black horses yez want, sur?"

"Shure the black horses has the heaves, an' isn't it Dennis McGoldrich that's always bin used to drivin' his honor?"

"Don't trust him, sur, he has fits," whispered a thick-headed fellow in Shanks' ear.

"And you'll have fits too, if you don't keep away from my ear,"

said Shanks, as he wrestled with two fellows who had clutched hold of his small traveling satchel, and fighting over who should carry it.

"Gresham Hotel, sur."

"They've got bed bugs there as big as turtles. Der store folks paints their advertisements on their backs and makes signboards out of them," shouted a rival tooter. "The Bilton House is the place to stop."

"If you go to that crib you'll find it's the Bilk-em House; why, they charge you if you sneeze, and they count the number of bites you take at breakfast, and they've been known to charge a man board for his shadow. You go to Morrison's House."

"Hear that, boss, he's after thryin' to sind the gentlemen to Morrison's, where the rats are so thick that they ate up a small-pox corpse last week before they could get him buriel. If his honor wants to stop at a darlant of a hotel, jest ye drop into Macken's Hotel."

"Ha, ha, ha! taters and buttermilk, pigs in the parlor, and beds stuffed with chicken heads! The Imperial is the only hotel for a gentleman!"

"Why, they buy stale meat and all the eggs the hens can't hatch. The boss says it takes the boarders' appetite away, and they can't eat much. Don't you go there, you let me show you Reynold's Hotel," chimed in another.

"I'll stale meat you over the eye-brow if you say that again. One thing's certain, we never yet poisoned anybody, or murdered any person, or robbed any boarders!" exclaimed the runner for the Imperial Hotel.

"Do you say we murdered anybody, you liar, you?"

"Who's—"

"You are!"

"I'll slam you all over the street for that!"

"You can't touch one side of me."

"Can't I?"

Then they laid aside their chin music, and waltzed for each other with their fists, and the time Shorty and his party left for Shelburne Hotel, where a suite of apartments had been engaged for them, they were rolling over each other in the middle of the street and chewing mud and ears indiscriminately.

"So dis is Dublin," observed Shorty, as they drove through the fine streets, "well if it'll only keep on doublin', it'll be a hunky ol' place after a while."

"Put his hed out der winder an' let 'im git som' fresh air in his ears," sang out the kid.

"It's a wonder it don't double you up like a double n," remarked Shanks.

"Shoot 'im on der spot, dat's wuss yet den mine," laughed Shorty.

"Spot 'im on der snoot an' buy 'im a refrigerator hat dat'll hol' ice," grinned the kid.

"That'd be a nice hat," retorted Shanks.

"I'll holler for der police 'f yer don't giv' us a rest," grinned the kid.

"No use gettin' mad 'cause yer in Ire-land," suggested Shorty, comically.

"I guess it was crossing the channel put me in Ireland," joked Shanks.

"Ain't yer 'fraid of 'splodin' wid all dem bad jokes in ter yer?" asked the kid.

Arriving at the hotel, they wended their way into the office and announced their arrival to a sassy, big-feeling, supercilious clerk, who eyed them lazily for a moment, and then drawled out:

"Oh, you're that circus lot; well, you'll want to register."

"Two registers, not much; a couple of grates or a stove'll do us," broke in Shorty, who was determined to take some of the starch out of the stuck-up youth.

"I mean—" commenced the youth, but Shorty interrupted him with:

"I don't care a darn if yer are mean, an' yer do look mean nuff ter skin a skeeter an' sell his body for bones an' taller, but yer ain't goin' ter toast us wid any of yer two registers."

"If you'll let me—"

"But I won't let yer or any oder sap-head put 'em up, an' if yer do I'll tak' dem ter pieces an' sling dem out der winder," threatened Shorty, while the other members of the party turned away and laughed.

"Great—"

"Yes, I've got no 'jections ter a grate, but yer can't ring in no registers on us at dis time of year."

"But by the register I mean—"

"No I won't buy nuthin': I wouldn't giv' yer two cents for all dat yer could pile in der house."

"I ain't talkin' about stoves, I allude—"

"I know blamed well yer ain't, but yer needn't tink yer kin git behind dat desk an' gas me inter buyin' any of yer confounded contraptions, for I won't hav' it; guess not, hey, Chips?" said Shorty, looking stern.

"Why don't yer mash 'im over der bugle if he lips yer?" chirped the kid.

"Does the infernal idiot think we want to sleep in an oven. I wonder if all the clerks in this country have got as much putty in place of brains as this dainty cat-fisher," spoke up Shanks.

"What's that, sir, you dared call me!" exclaimed the clerk, getting fiery red up to his ears.

"Well, he called yer catfisher, but I don't tink dat yer've got sense nuff for dat poshish," replied Shorty, coolly.

The dandified clerk saw they were too much for him, and crawled into his shell.

"Now, den, 'f yer'll show us up ter our rooms we'll dust off, while yer kin flop 'round an' see dat der chuck's got up on time, an' nex' time yer want ter put on frills, don't pick up any of dese Yankee hams ter show dem off on," continued Shorty, and the waiter showed them at once to their rooms, which they found to be a very handsome large suite on the first floor and facing the street.

After washing and rendering themselves presentable, they adjourned to the supper-room, where they did ample justice to a well-cooked and well-served supper, and arose from the table feeling themselves able to whip the Irish Giant, with one hand tied behind their backs.

The next morning Shorty was the first up, and after pushing the curtains to one side, and flattening his nose against the window-pane, he grunted:

"Rain, an' more of it. Dis may be a bully good country for young ducks, and oder fowls wid dere toes glued together, but 'f I had ter live 'ere for two months I'd pray ter der Lord ter giv' me an injin-rubber skin an' an umbrella growin' out of my spine."

"What would you want the umbrella fastened on your spine for?" asked Shanks, sleepily.

"So's yer or Chips couldn't borer it," replied Shorty.

"What's it rainin', water or tater peelin's?" inquired a drowsy voice, from under the bed clothes of Shorty's bed.

"Jest yer turn dat half pint of humanity, yer call Shorty Junior, out of dat bed, jam yer snoot up 'gainst one of dese foggy winder panes an' find out for yerself," replied his dad.

"Tank yer, I'll take yer word, an' dat's more den I tink anybody else would, dat I kno's of," said the kid.

"Com' speel out of dat bed; the early birl catches der worm."

"What's dat got ter do wid me; I don't want any worms, 'cause I ain't goin' fishin', an' I'd radder hav' chicken den worms for steady vittles," retorted Shorty Junior.

"You'll get a lickin' instead of chicken, if yer ain't out on der floor in a couple of minutes."

"Oh, 'f yer want ter make a flor-al offerin' of me yer'll find me too seed-y," grinned the kid, as he climbed out, and, running over, turned a somersault on top of Shanks, which brought that party up sitting.

"Here, confound it, what's that you're doing?" exclaimed Shanks, coming up suddenly to a sitting position and making a grab at the kid's legs as they dusted away.

"Dat's what dey call a back-hand flip-flop, an' it wasn't no slouch of a one, either," replied the imp.

"Flip-flop, hey! and on the top of me; now this here thing's played out; if I was a man built out of India-rubber I'd be busted all to pieces with the banging, bruising, breaking, crushing, jamming, falling, smashing, pounding, and knocking about I get, and I've jest sworn, signed and sealed a determination to kick a hole right straight through the first man, woman, child, or mule that winks an eye or wags an ear at me. I ain't a gymnasium for people to practice on, and the next one that tries it'll think he's got hold of an uncaged lion," remarked Shanks, and he swung his long legs out of the bed just in time to catch a rap across the shin bones from a cane which the kid had been balancing on his chin.

This was piling on more agony than Shanks could stand, and with a cry of pain he grabbed up his boots and hurled one of them with all his strength at Shorty Junior.

It was a good line shot and would have told, had not the kid dropped all in a pile on the floor, and allowed it to pass on and out through a pane of glass into the street, where it struck a young lady, who was passing, on the bridge of the nose, and carried away her equanimity and two inches of skin.

The second boot did better, as it grazed the kid's head, swept a lot of glasses and toilet articles off with a crash, and wound up by mashing the looking-glass over the bureau.

"Sail in, ol' pard," cried Shorty. "Dere's der spittoon an' pitcher yer can exercise on, an' I'll slide downstairs an' get yer an' armful of bricks an' all the poker I kin scare up."

"Oh, yes, you can grin like a jessee cat, and think it very funny to see a fellow skinned from head to foot," grumbled Shanks, as he gummed a piece of sticking-plaster on the sore spot.

It required considerable patting on the back to smooth Shanks' ruffled feelings, but a good warm breakfast fixed him all hunkydory, and by the time he had smoked his first cigar, he was as ripe and ready to take a hand in a racket as ever.

After paying a visit to the circus grounds and overseeing the pitching of the tents, the formation of the ring and things generally, Shorty Junior observed:

"Dere, everyting I tink is lovely, an' der goose hangs high, now der flip-flopers an' oder hams kin practice dis afternoon. We won't hav' no gran' triumphal entry 'count of the drizzle, for tho' I don't tink dere's any sugar or salt dat'd melt 'bout any of us, dat dere is angels an' cherubs, still I ain't goin' ter slosh 'round in der rain an' mud 'fi thort Saint Patrick was standin' on a corner waitin' ter see it."

"Yes, tings look purty ship-shape," replied his dad.

"Look as good as an empty house ever looks, and that's bad enough to give anybody the blues," remarked Shanks, who was making figures with his cane in the saw-dust.

"Wber' yer goin' ter pike ter dis afternoon?" asked the kid, as he led the way out of the tent.

"I tink bed'd be about der snookziest ol' lay out I kin tumble ter," said Shorty.

"Or go down to 'Sweet Dublin Bay' an' drown ourselves, so's to get to a dry climate," chimed in Shanks.

"Oh, bosh, yer fellers git down in der mouf wuss den a settin' hen, 'count of a little rain. What yer say ter clappin' on lots of overcoats, an' gettin' a real ol' Irish jauntin' car an' takin' a ride outside of der city? I'd lik' ter see somfin' of dis country," suggested the kid.

"That would pass the day, and I'm bored looking at brick houses," answered Shanks.

"I'se 'greed, but wher' yer goin' ter scare up a car?" said his dad.

"Oh, I kin scare more of dem dan yer kin shake a stick at. Yer two sail on yer toes ter der hotel, keep yer heels out of der mud an' don't wear yer segars ter one side or dey'll snipe on ter yer for Fenians. I'll skate 'round der village an' freeze on ter a rig," said Shorty Junior, as he left them at the door of the tent.

After making some inquiries from hackney coachmen, he was directed to a certain tavern where the drivers of those vehicles were known to frequent.

"Thank ye, sur," said a driver, as Shorty Junior greased his hand with a shilling, "but shure don't let them be after puttin' Deaf Lanty an' his owld black horse on ter ye."

"Why, what's der matter with him?" asked the kid.

"Faix, an' in the furst place he's as dafe as a stone, an' troth an' he's nivir half sober from wun day to the ither, and he'll drive that owld black baste of his as if the devil was after him, and sich a joutlin' as ye'd recave ye'd niver get over," explained the hackney coach driver.

Thanking him, Shorty Junior struck out for the place named, and there was a merry, mischievous look in his eyes that meant anything and everything.

"Is dat driver yer call Deaf Lanty 'round dese diggin's?" he inquired of the proprietor, as he entered the drinking shop.

"There he's aslape in the corner forinst yer."

"Is he ter drunk ter drive dis afternoon?" asked the kid.

"Musha, no, shure an' I'll throw a tub of wather over him an' he'll be as good as iver."

"Well, you see I want ter engage 'im for dis afternoon, an' as der ol' cove is purty well gummed up in der ears, why I'll jes' giv' yer der route we wants ter go, an' tell 'im I wants 'im ter drive like the wind," explained Shorty Junior.

"Faix he'll drive fast and hard enough to suit ye, I'm afther thinking."

"Well, send him down wid his jaunting car ter der Shelburne Hotel and tell 'im ter ask for Shorty Junior."

"That, is ye the little porker that's opened ther big circus?"

"Yes, com' an' see me ter nite," laughed the kid, as he threw a couple of tickets on the counter and trotted out.

Punctual to time, the jaunting car dashed up to the front of the hotel with Deaf Lanty about half cocked, driving his skinny black plug.

Shorty, Shanks and the kid took their seats on the sides with their legs over the wheels, and after settling themselves, Shorty said, pleasantly:

"All ready, driver."

But Lanty sat bolt upright, and never moved.

"Go ahead," said Shanks a trifle louder, but nary a move out of Lanty or the black horse.

"What's he mean?" asked Shorty.

"Nuthin', nuthin', he's only sayin' a short prayer for yer souls," replied the kid, and giving Lanty's coat tail a sly twitch, that party brought a thick stick he carried down on the black horse, and away they dashed.

"Not quite so fast, my man," said Shanks, whose teeth were chattering, but Lanty laid on his club, and the black skeleton galloped wildly along, while small boys on the street corners shouted:

"It's Mad Lanty!"

"Hurra for drunken Lanty."

"Begorra, it's Deaf Lanty!"

"Drive slower," exclaimed Shorty.

"Yes, for Heaven's sake don't let us go through the city as if we were all drunk and mad," shouted Shanks, who had only saved

himself from being pitched out half a dozen times by clutching the sides.

But Lanty spun around a corner, gave a wild whoop, swung his stick around his head and drove faster, if possible, than ever.

"The man must be a raving lunatic!" exclaimed Shanks, getting pale in the face.

"Or drunk!" said Shorty.

"Drive easier, I say!" fairly shrieked Shanks, nudging the driver.

"Yis, it's aisy enough afther yez get used to drivin' the baste," replied Lanty.

"Not so fast!" screamed Shorty, in the key of a locomotive whistle.

"Will he last? Faix, I'd trust the likes of him for that. He's as fresh as a daisy," answered Lanty.

Leaving the city, they struck one of the worst country roads in the Three Kingdoms, muddy, rocky, full of holes and gulleys, which the rain had made, and here, for the first time Deaf Lanty, the black skeleton and his rickety old car, seemed to come out in full force. Lanty yelled and shouted like a fiend, swinging his shillelah, and pounding the old black horse, who dashed ahead like a whirlwind, the jaunting-car pitching into holes and hollows, and sending Shorty, Shanks and the kid bouncing and flying about in all directions, and only kept from being pitched out by holding on with tooth and nail, while fountains of mud were caught up and played over them.

"Oh, Lord, we'll be killed," groaned Shanks, as the wheel on his side plunged into a mud-hole, and he caught a splatter of filth as big as a buckwheat cake under the eye.

"If I ever git out of dis pickle yer kin bet everyting yer worth dat I'se got thro', an's willin' ter giv' a full receipt for all der jauntin' car bizzness out of jail," said Shorty, as he lost his hat overboard in a mad struggle to keep from being pitched out.

"Howld hard, now, yez honors, till yez see me sind him over a bit ov a bad sphot on the road," screamed Lanty.

"Hang it, man, you'll murder us!" yelled Shanks, trying to hold on with one hand and grab Lanty with the other.

"Hi, yi, go it ol' def ears!" sang out the kid, who was in his glory and clung to his seat like wax.

The bad spot proved to be an awful mud-hole into which they plunged, the car standing on one wheel and creaking at every point.

"If Providence'll forgive me for this trip, I'll never tempt it again in a like manner," cried Shanks, as they emerged from the hole, plastered three inches thick with mud, and with every bone in their bodies aching and protesting against such usage.

After a mad, wild drive of a mile or two further, Lanty drove them back to the city the sickest, dirtiest and most disgusted pair you ever saw.

"Begorra, look at Lanty and his pigs!"

"Howld yer whist, they've bin rowling in the bog!"

"Troth, an' it's thim furriners that's afther wantin' to carry off some owld Irish soil to raise shamrocks wid!" shouted people on the sidewalk as they passed. Reaching the hotel, Shanks leaped quickly out, and taking a silver coin from his pocket, said:

"I don't know, in my own mind, whether I ought to fee you or shoot you, but as I have got the money and I haven't got the gun, I'll give you the former."

"Ther's an Irish reception for yer," said Shorty, as they entered the tent that night, and found it packed from the top row of seats down to the very edge of the ring, around which was grouped a circle of ragged, dirty-faced, fun-loving gossoons—just the boys that would go their last farthing on the kid.

"They say an Irish audience is the most difficult to please in the world," said Shanks, as he stood looking around.

When I say that the show was a success, I fail entirely to describe the enthusiastic welcome and boundless applause that the company met with. The Irish, as Shanks had said, knew good acting when they saw it, and were willing to give it its full meed of praise. Linked to that there's a green, warm corner in the heart of every true-born Irishman for the land that the stars and stripes wave over, and here they were on Irish soil sitting beneath the banner of the United States, and they testified their delight in cheers that made it ring for blocks around.

The mules were what woke the boys up, though, and for half an hour there was a constant scrambling on, hugging of necks, pitching over heads, lying down on, kicking, biting and begging out of the ring, with all the sawdust they could carry hanging to their hair and clothes.

The minstrel performance tickled the old folks immensely, and everybody went home well pleased and bound to come again.

After a week of such houses, it is not to be wondered at that the kid hated to pull up stakes and make for Belfast, but the engagement had been too extensively billed to back out of, and so they once more took the road, this time their destination being Belfast, where they duly arrived, and like the Arab pitched their tents.

CHAPTER XI.

"Dere ain't no slouch 'bout dis town, I'll bet; why it's as lively as a three-legged flee," remarked Shorty, as he watched the transfer of the circus stock from the cars to the tent and stables prepared for them.

"Then you'd better flee from it, and as for lively, why what's to hinder Belfast from being a fast belle?" inquired Shanks.

"Hush, yer in a country wher' dey hang men for murdherin' the English langwidge," said Shorty.

"Well, I've got 'bout all der liv' stock out, so I 'spect we kin waddle 'long," said the kid, joining them.

"Say, Mester, won't yez let me ride one av the donkeys down to the tent?" asked a tall, big-headed boy, running over and touching Shorty Junior on the arm.

"An' who's goin' ter pay yer funeral expenses 'fi did?" inquired the kid.

"Och, shure, sur, I kin ride donkeys. Plaze let me try him; ax dad there," begged the boy.

"And faix, an' it's true for ye, ivery word, Dennie," said his daddy, proudly.

"Well, 'f yer want ter ride dem, bile 'long an' bounce on ter one of dem, an' yer kin tell yer dad dat he kin shake his leg over toder one 'f he wants ter, an' I'll giv' a sovereign to der one dat's down ter der tent fust," replied the kid.

When the old man heard the offer he gave a hurrah, stuck his clay pipe in the side of his plug hat, and running over to where the trick mules were standing, he took a twist of the halter around the animal's nose and jumped on, his son following his example.

"Gee up, now!" shouted the old fellow, digging his heels into the mule's ribs.

The mule rolled up the white of his eyes, gave a wicked twist of his short, stumpy tail, and started off like mad for half a block, then, bracing his front feet, he reared up behind and shot the old gentleman over his head and into a lot of crockery, which a merchant had displayed in front of his store.

"Howly Saint Patrick! what's that?" exclaimed the merchant, as he darted out of his store on hearing the terrible crash.

"Bad cess to ye, for a dacateful baste!" exclaimed the old gentleman, scrambling to his feet, and breaking nearly as much more china in the effort.

"Och, be jabers! I'm ruined, I'm ruined!" yelled the proprietor of the store, and he caught hold of the old man's collar to detain him until damages were settled.

"Lave go of me!" growled the old fellow.

"I will whin yez settle for ivery ha'porth yez broke," replied the storekeeper.

"An' not before?"

"Not an instant," answered the storekeeper.

"Troth, and I think ye will," shouted the old man, and he let fly his right fist at the other's eye, while his left fist knocked half of the crockeryman's front teeth into the gutter, then closed in on him and got his opponent's head under his arm, and by the time the proprietor got it out, his face looked as if fourteen thousand ice wagons had run over it. Then he kicked the crockeryman on the shins, bent him over, slammed him down and wiped the sidewalk with him.

Some passers by interfered and proposed making it a ring fight, but when they came to look for the old fellow he had skipped.

In the meantime his son had succeeded in getting on the other mule, and unwarmed by his father's experience, he commenced shouting, starting the mule off at a gallop which that cunning animal kept up for a few yards, till he came to a muddy spot on the road, when he deliberately lay down and rolled over with his rider, while the bystanders and our party roared with laughter.

"Now, den, dad, what's der name of der hotel we're goin' ter snore in?" asked the kid.

"Well, I t'ink we'll air our boot-jacks in the Imperial Hotel; der name's high-toned nuff ter do most 'thout a hotel," replied his dad.

"A very suitable place for that imp to stay," said Shanks, and calling a hack they were driven to the hotel, which they found to be a very handsome building and their apartments all they could desire.

"Goin' ter rustle 'round dis mornin'?" asked the kid, after they had finished their toilets.

"Nary rustle for yer dad 'f he knows it!"

"And I'm just going to take all the solid comfort I can out of this easy chair," said Shanks, as he lit a cigar, and cocked his feet up on the window-sill.

"Well, 'si ain't an ol' foggy jest yet I t'ink I'll tak' a kite 'round der town on Buster," remarked the kid, as he jumped up and shook himself.

"Don't run over ha'f der city," said Shorty.

"Or kick down the postoffice," observed Shanks.

"I won't, I won't, an' don't yer two get so funny while I'se gone dat I'll hav' ter put a porous plaster on yer ears to draw der jokes

out when I com's back," retorted Shorty Junior, as he closed the door and hurried to the stable, where he had Buster saddled and led forth.

"Hello, Bust, ol' feller! We're goin' ter tak' a spin," said the kid, as he patted his horse's neck on mounting.

The linen and flax mills were just letting loose their thousands of operators to dinner as Shorty Junior turned into the main street, and his appearance mounted on such a fiery, snorting steel as Buster created quite an excitement.

"Say, snatch dat donkey cart out of der way," called out Shorty Junior, to a peddler, whose donkey and cart completely blocked the way.

"Take it asy; the world wasn't built in a day, shure," replied the peddler.

"Dat settles it; 'fi can't go through I kin go over," said the kid, and wheeling Buster around he gave him a short, quick gallop, and touching him with the spurs as he neared the cart, he cleared it with a spring, leaving the frightened peddler laying flat on his stomach on the bottom of the vehicle.

After a pleasant gallop outside of the city, which was enjoyed by both horse and rider, they returned to the city, and were passing through one of the streets when he came across the Queen's College boys amusing themselves on their playground with a game of football.

"Hello, stranger; where did you get so much horse?" shouted one of the college boys.

"Had 'im b'ilt ter order, same as yer was, judgin' by yer legs," replied Shorty Junior.

This raised a laugh at the boy's expense, as he had very long legs.

"Hadn't you and your black friend better come over and visit us?" laughed another of the boys.

"Well, I don't keer 'fi do, though we can't stop more den a minit," said the kid, and giving Buster a touch with the spurs, he put him at the five-foot wall and cleared it like a swallow.

"Good enough! you'll do!" shouted the boys, as Shorty Junior reined up Buster in their midst, and they flocked around him.

"Don't com' ter close, fellers, as dis nag's apt ter want ter shake hands wid yer wid his hind legs," laughed the kid.

"Where did you spring from?" asked one of the boys, who was apparently a leader among them.

"Well, I hails from New York, but I'se floatin' 'round der world jest at present, sort of loose an' careless."

"Oh, then you belong to the Yankee boys' circus?"

"Yer bet."

"Why, what do you do?" asked another.

"Well, I owns, bosses, an' runs der show, 'sides takin' a hand in mos' everyting," answered Shorty Junior.

"Ever play football?" asked the boy, who looked like a leader.

"Yer rite I hav'."

"Like to play a game?"

"Can't jest now, but I'll tell yer what I'll do; yer pick out yer best players, an' I'll scare up a gang from 'mongst my circus boys, an' we'll play yer ter-morrer," answered Shorty Junior.

"Done," said the other.

"Wher'll we git a place ter play?"

"Oh, we'll attend to that," said the boy.

"Are you the captain of the college boys' club?" asked the kid.

"Yes."

"All rite, den, as dey say in New York, 'I'll see yer later,'" said the kid, and turning Buster's head he leaped back over the wall, and galloped back to the stable.

"Say, dad, we're goin' ter play der Queen's College fellers a game of football," remarked the kid, as they ate their dinner that day.

"Who'se we?" asked Shorty.

"Why, yer an' Shanks an' me an' a lot of der best of der show gang," he answered.

"Yer a natural born goose, Chips, ter ever think of playin' 'gainst a crowd dat's got a picked gang all used to playin' together," said his dad.

"An' I s'pose I'm expected to go out and have my shins kicked off me," remarked Shanks.

"Yer orter be t'ankful dat dere is som' use yer kin put dem legs ter," laughed the kid.

"When did yer tell dem dat yer'd play?" asked Shorty.

"Ter-morrer."

"How many innings?"

"Three."

"Well, I expect I may as well order a pair of crutches, for I won't have any legs left," sighed Shanks.

"Don't yer fret, I'll buy yer a velocipede if yer lose yer legs," laughed the kid.

"I'd rather have a wheelbarrow, any day," said Shanks.

"All rite, den, I'll get yer a wheelbarrow," replied Shorty Junior.

After dinner Shorty and Shanks adjourned to the front steps of the hotel, and tilting their chairs back, lit their cigars and settled

themselves for a good, quiet smoke, the kid strolling off down the street and entering a large agricultural implement store, inquired: "Got any wheelbarrows?"

"Plenty of them, step back this way," answered the clerk.

"No, I don't want ter git dem for myself, but dere's a gentleman named Shanks up ter der Imperial Hotel dat wants a lot, an' he wanted ter know if yer couldn't send som' of yer men round wid der different kinds," said the kid.

"Why, certainly. Here, Tom, Pete and Pat, take these three barrows up to the Imperial Hotel, and inquire for Mr. Shanks."

"Yer'll find 'im sittin' outside smokin'," said the kid, as he went out, and into another store, where he told the same story, and more barrows were trundled off. This he kept up as long as he could find a store that sold them.

"Hello, 'ere comes a wheelbarrow brigade," said Shorty, as he saw three men trundling the first installment up in front of the steps, where they halted, and one of them asked:

"Which of yez jintlemen is afther bein' Misther Shanks?"

"Why, that's me," said Shanks, with an astonished look on his face.

"Dade an' yer right named," chuckled the man, as he looked at Shanks' length of limb. "Well, come and see which of the barrows ye loike best."

"What in thunder do I want of wheelbarrows?" demanded Shanks.

"Not a hair do I know or care, misther man, only you've got to come down and see them," replied the man, firmly.

"You've made some infernal mistake, man."

"Sorra a mistake, sur."

"Well, wheel them away, then, for I wouldn't have one or a thousand of them if you'd give them to me," said Shanks, excitedly.

The men harnessed themselves to their barrows again and departed grumbling, and Shanks was still wondering why a man should send him a lot of wheelbarrows, when a second delegation of barrows drew up in front of the door, and invited his inspection.

"What in blue blazes would I do with barrows?" he exclaimed, excitedly.

"Shure, and that's hard to tell, sur," said the spokesman.

"Well, I never owned a barrow, never had any use for a barrow, and never expect to own one," remarked Shanks, excitedly.

"Then what'd ye be afther makin' us trot them up here for, bad luck to yer?"

"Who made you trot them up?"

"Ye did."

"You're a liar!" screamed Shanks.

"Be jabers. I won't take that," yelled the man, and dropping his barrow, he made a rush for Shanks, who knocked him over his barrow and from which he was dragged up and shook by a cop.

He wasn't fairly out of sight before two more parties with barrows appeared and demanded to see our long-limbed friend, who now fairly raging rushed out and kicked the barrows into the gutter; this proceeding on his part roused the indignation of the propellers of said barrows, and they went for Shanks in a body and, by the time Shorty dragged him out from underneath seven men and four barrows, he had received eighty kicks and twelve square punches on the nose.

While they were fighting six new delegations with green, brown, red and unpainted wheelbarrows arrived and shouted for Shanks, while a small procession of wheelbarrows could be seen coming up the street.

"Chris—topher Co—lumbus! lock me up in a room—here comes a million more of the things," cried Shanks, as he fled into the house and sought refuge in his room, where two minutes later a waiter knocked on the door and said:

"Plase, sur, there's a lot of min downstairs wid wheelbarrows, axin for yez."

"Bother their wheelbarrows! Send them to—send them to Jericho, and if an army of them comes, don't you dare to come near this door again or I'll brain you with an ax!" exclaimed Shanks, and he threw himself into a chair and groaned.

"Say, dad, was dere any wheelbarrows 'long 'ere dis afternoon?" asked the kid, innocently, on his return half an hour later.

"Wheelbarrows, why the street's been lined wid them," replied his dad. Then, as an idea struck him, he turned suddenly on the kid, and asked:

"Yer put up dat job on Shanks?"

"Me!"

"Yes, yer, an' all I've got ter say is dat 'f he finds it out dis'll be der las' town yer'll show up in, for he'll murder yer."

"I guess I'll risk all that," said the kid.

Belfast followed Dublin's example and turned out a bully old house to welcome the Yankee Boy's Circus that evening, and never did a crowd laugh heartier, cheer louder, or go away more pleased than this one did. Shorty reaped a rich harvest on his opening night. The story of his many rackets since he started out had been caught up by the press and he found himself as well known on mak-

ing his entry, as if he had lived in Belfast all his life. The Irish boys, with whom he immediately became a prime favorite, by his tricks and funny actions, cheered and applauded him to the echo, while the elder people could not but praise his daring acts of horsemanship, and laugh over his comicalities both as a clown and minstrel.

"Guess you'll be able to start a bank by the time you get home, if you keep on getting such houses as that," remarked Shanks, as they were on their way back to the hotel after the performance.

"D'yer mean a faro bank, 'cause my name is Chips?" asked the kid.

"No, though it'd be a skinning game I'd like to play with you," said Shanks.

The next morning Shorty Junior selected from his troupe several of the most active and best young fellows belonging to it, to make up his football party, and having purchased a football they started out in search of a field to practice in.

About a quarter of a mile from the town they came to a closely-mowed level field, and the kid, who was in advance, led the way over a low fence.

They had just chosen sides and were getting ready to play, when three keepers and a dog came rushing down upon them shouting:

"Go away! Tramp off, or we'll arrest you all!"

"Ah, go scratch yer back up ag'in a post," replied the kid.

"An' you don't mean to go?" asked the head keeper, halting.

"Nixy a go, cully," grinned the kid.

"Sic them, Towser," shouted the man.

The dog sprang forward with open jaws, but quick as lightning one of the trapeze performers snatched him by the tail, swung him around his head once, and letting him fly, knocked the head keeper over, and all the fight out of the dog, who slunk away with his tail between his legs.

The head keeper got up boiling mad, and selecting the kid for the victim of his displeasure, rushed over at him. But Shorty Junior had his eye on him, and as he came within a few feet, he kicked the football straight at him, with all his might. The rubber ball flew straight, and hit him fair on the nose, checking him for a moment.

"Now, look 'ere, 'f yer fellers are spilin' for a fite, we'll give yer all yer want of it, an' we kin lick jest 'bout seventeen thousan' beef-chawers lik' yer, so yer'd better pull in yer horns, back water, and paddle off 'fore yer get bounced," said Shorty, speaking up.

After a good morning's practice, in which the men acquitted themselves splendidly, they returned to Belfast, and in the afternoon the grand championship match was played.

Both sides were promptly on the ground, the Irish wearing green sashes, while the Yankee boys sported a red, white and blue rosette on their breasts. The match had got noised around the city, and the consequence was a large crowd had gathered to see the struggle, and betting was largely indulged in, two to one and even three to one on the Irish being offered, although the readiness with which Shorty, Shanks and the kid picked up all bets somewhat staggered them.

"I've got a hundred pounds I'll bet against fifty that the Irish boys wins," said a big cattle drover.

"Yer my oyster on der half shell, stick up yer sugar for a thousan' 'f yer say so," remarked Shorty, pulling out a fat pocketbook and counting out the notes.

An umpire and ground having been chosen, each side took its respective position, and the word came:

"Are you both ready?"

"Ready!" sang out the captain of the college crowd.

"Yer bet!" said Shorty Junior.

"Then play!"

For the first few minutes it was hard to tell who or what was going on, there was a laughing, crying, whooping, yelling, kicking, plunging, trampling, bruising crowd in a bunch, now driving slowly toward the Irish side, and then again swaying and drifting toward the American side, but finally there was a grand burst, and the bunch breaking up the different players were recognized and cheered.

A fresh start, another rush of contestants, a few almost unavoidable errors by the Yankees, and the Irish boys sent the ball over the American goal, winning one out of the three.

"Dat don't 'mount ter nuthin', fellers, only jest remember dat der nex' two games 'longs ter us, an' I want yer ter play for dem if yer bust," said the kid, cheerfully, as he mopped the perspiration off his face.

In the second inning Shorty Junior sent the ball well in among them, and his men animated and cheered on by his cries followed it up.

In vain the college boys tried all they knew, and fought every inch, the Yankee boys pushed on, kicking, cheering and crushing, and finally Shanks, by a tremendous kick from his long legs, sent the ball high over all their heads, and clear across the Irish goal.

"Put it dere, pard; dem long legs of yenn is trumps after all," laughed the kid.

Each side now had one inning, and the next one was the tug of war, deciding the match.

Both parties took their places feeling the full responsibility.

"Boys, for the honor of the old college and Ireland, do yer best," said the college captain.

"Fellers, for der bald-headed 'Merican turkey, der star spangled smasher, an' all Yankee doodle, fite it out on dis line an' stick ter me an' we'll win," said Shorty Junior, and his men answered him with a dauntless cheer.

The college team tried the other's tactics in the third inning, their captain sending the ball flying into an uncovered spot and following it up by a grand rally, but Shorty Junior's boys were too quick for him, and before they could reach the spot, Shorty had kicked it back a kitin'.

Then came the grand and exciting struggle, each side closed in around it, and the crush was awful, both captains urging on their men by word and example. The kid with his clothes all torn, his shins kicked black and blue, his face and hair covered with dust, was always shouting to his men, who responded gallantly, and they were slowly foot by foot driving the college boys back, when one of the latter kicked the ball fair into Shorty Junior's arms, and the kid grabbing it hard and fast, ducked between one man's legs, squeezed between two others, bobbed under another player's arms and was out on the clear ground and kicking the ball along ahead of him before they missed it.

The Irish boys made a dashing and gallant attempt to head him off, but it was now too late, the kid kicking the ball high over their goal, just in time for a professor, who was passing at that moment, to catch it on his chin.

"Now, fellers, help me ter giv' three rattlin' ol' Yankee cheers an' a howlin' tiger for der Queen's College boys of Belfast," proposed Shorty Junior, and they were given with a will, the college boys returning the compliment.

Every seat in the circus was filled by a laughing, jesting, good-natured crowd, long before it was time for the performance to commence. The Queen's College boys, having received a generous invitation from Shorty Junior, were present in a body and occupied the best seats in the tent.

"Once more der bell rings an' der bulgine starts," said the kid, as he led the way into the ring for the opening entree of all nations. Their appearance was greeted with a loud clapping of hands, and everything was passing off lovely, when Buster in one of the evolutions suddenly kicked a cream-colored horse behind him on the front legs, bringing him down on his knees and dumping his fair rider—the Queen of Spain—over his head in a mixed up heap of blushes, striped stockings and sawdust. They picked her up tenderly. But the yellow plug was so shaky about the knees that they were both bounced, amid roars of laughter from the audience.

"Dat hoss'll never stop his devilment till somebody shoots a canon ball thro' 'im," remarked Shorty to his son, as the latter was getting ready to ride Buster in his bare-back act.

"What's der rumpus wid 'im now?"

"Didn't he kick a hoss on der knees just now?"

"Well, I 'spect he thort he needed it, an' as for der Queen of Spain, why dere wasn't much Queen's Spain after all," punned the kid.

"Ain't yer 'fraid of cotchin' der cramps gettin' off such jokes?"

"Not much," laughed the kid, as he passed out into the ring, where, having mounted Buster, he went through his daring bare-back performance, the audience cheering and applauding.

"Now fetch in dem gates, an' hold dem up till we see if we kin climb dem," directed the kid.

Two large five-barred gates were brought out by the supes.

"Now den, wait till I git 'im goin', and den hold up der gate, an' I want nuff of yer ter snatch on ter it ter keep it steady," said Shorty, as he put Buster into a gallop.

"Now, den, up wid yer gates!" he sang out a moment later, and the clowns, ringmaster and half a dozen supes grabbed hold of the gates, and bracing themselves held on to them.

"G'lang, Buster—now den up and over!" yelled Shorty Junior, but Buster was in one of his cross-grain humors, and instead of jumping he crashed against the gate with his powerful chest, sending ringmaster, clowns and supes flying head over heels among the sawdust.

"Hold yer gate fast!" yelled the kid, to the supes, who were hanging on to the other gate.

They were pale, but they hung on till Buster was within a few feet of them, when they suddenly, and with one accord, dropped it and fled, some of them in their terror dashing through the audience and out into the open air before they could be stopped.

"What in Jerusalem was yer tryin' to do with that gate, foolishness?" asked Shorty, as the kid came into the dressing tent.

"Why, didn't yer see I was tryin' ter mak' Buster strike his gait! an' he done it like a book," answered the imp, as he made a break for his department to get into one of his clown suits.

In the next act all three of the clowns were in the ring at once, Shorty Junior dressed to represent Uncle Sam, in striped pants,

blue pigeon-tail coat and white plug hat, and you can bet they had the audience screaming with laughter from the time they entered till they left the ring.

There was one part where Shorty Junior, in dodging a crack of the ringmaster's whip, threw himself down in front of the other clowns, who tripped over him, and jumping up, first one and then the other of them would snatch him by the slack of the breeches and toss him over their heads, leaving him to come down on his feet or his head as he saw fit. This tossing over the head part Shorty Junior had come to the conclusion was played out, and he soon thought of a racket that would stop it and at the same time get him square with the other clowns. Procuring a small piece of leather he drove it full of sharp pointed carpet tacks and placed it in the seat of his pantaloons.

"Dere, mebbe dere won't be som' snortin' goin' on 'bout der time dat dey snatches on ter me," grinned the kid, and slipping himself into the rest of the suit he was soon ready, and coming out he gave the joke away to his dad and Shanks in a whisper, so that they would be on the look out for the fun, and then followed the other clowns into the ring.

Everything passed off lovely, and the kid as usual threw himself before the clowns, who tripped over him, and then one of them turning quickly grabbed at the slack of Shorty Junior's pants, gave a howl of agony and went dancing around the ring sucking his fingers.

The other clown looked after him for a moment with a puzzled expression of face, then jumping forward he clutched hold of a handful of those tacks and the next minute was seen to polka around in the sawdust trying to find a place to die quietly, while the audience seeing some fun not down on the bills, laughed and cheered.

After enjoying themselves for a week in the best kind of a way and reaping besides a financial harvest, our party were obliged to once more pull up stakes and start for Limerick, where they arrived safely.

CHAPTER XII.

"Now, den, fellers, up tents, an' I wants ter see ye shake yerselves 'bout it," said Shorty Junior, on their arrival at the grounds selected for the circus.

The men pitched in with a will, and in a very short space of time the ring was formed, the tents raised and the flags of all nations flying.

"Steam 'long, dad, an' show us where we're goin' to hash, for my stomjack t'inks my throat's cut," remarked the kid, after everything had been attended to.

"Now, yer jest keep cool, Chips, an' don't work yerself inter any prickly heat, 'si don't happen to be a guide book; I don't know any more dan a crow where der place is," replied Shorty, quietly, and without moving off the pile of boards he was seated on.

"Yer look as if yer boarded where yer sit," joked the kid.

"What's the name of the house, pard?" asked Shanks.

"I believe dey call it Cruise's Hotel, der agent wrote me it was der only bang up hotel ter stop at," answered Shorty.

"I t'ink we'll have ter make a cruise 'fore we find it," said his son.

"It wasn't Santa Cruz rum got in your head?" coddled Shanks.

"Waltz off an' hunt up a hack, Chips," said his dad.

"Wouldn't a cough do as well as a hack?" asked the imp.

"It'll be a cuffin yer'll get I t'ink 'f yer don't skate."

"I'se off, dad, an'll send yer a hack dat kno's der way, but I t'ink I'll walk 'cause I'se got one or two t'ings ter get," said Shorty Junior, as he trotted away.

After some inquiry he found a hackney stand, and approaching a tough-looking, weather-beaten old cabby, he asked:

"D'yer kno' wher' der lunatic 'sylum is?"

"Av coarse I do," replied cabby.

"An' wou'd yer like ter grease yer fingers wid a double fare?"

"Troth an' it's the same I'd loike."

"Well, I've got a couple of looneys dat I wants carted out ter der 'sylum."

"Are they straight-jacketers, sur?"

"No, no, dey're jest as quiet as oder folks, 'cept dey see me, den dey snort."

"Where'll I be afther finding them?" asked cabby.

"Oh, dey're rite down by der circus tent sittin' on a pile of boards; yer can't miss dem 'cause one of dem's tall as a flag-pole an' der oder's a runt," replied the kid.

"What'll I tell them?"

"Just ask for Mister Shorty an' Shanks, an' tell dem dat yer come ter tak' dem ter der Cruise's Hotel, but don't let on nothin' 'bout der 'sylum," cautioned Shorty Junior, handing him his double fare and an extra shilling for a drink.

"Dere, I 'spect dad'll rave an' Shanks'll howl when they tumbles

ter der racket, but I'se got lots of time ter get a square feed an' git out of der road," soliloquized Shorty Junior, as he watched the hack drive off.

"There comes a cab, now. I'll bet that's for us," said Shanks.

"Well, les' go an' secure a cab-in passage," laughed Shorty, tossing the butt of his cigar into a blind-beggar's hat along with some coins.

"Phat's yer names?" asked the weather-beaten cabby, as he drove up.

"My name is Shanks, and this gentleman is known as Shorty."

"Well, yez ther ones I'm afther."

"Yer kno' wher' we want ter go?" inquired Shorty, as he jumped into the cab.

"Faix, an' I do, an'll take the pair of yez there, if I don't bring yez back," answered the driver, as he whipped up his horse, and they started off.

"Hang it all, why this hotel must be out in the wilderness," remarked Shanks, after they had rode some fifteen minutes without stopping.

"Bully good job dat we didn't try an' hoof it; we wouldn't got dere 'fore dinner time som' day nex' week," said Shorty.

Five minutes' more drive and they whirled through a gateway and pulled up in front of an immense, massive stone building.

"Here yez are safe an' sound ag'in, an' hopes yer'll rimber Barney the driver."

"Looks more like a castle or prison than a hotel, but I s'pose that's the way they build them in this bog-trotting country," remarked Shanks, as they tossed the driver a shilling.

"I see dey's got der winders all grated; I s'pect dat's ter keep der guests from giving their board bill a moonlight skip," said Shorty, giving the driver a tip, and following Shanks up the step.

"Who did you wish to see?" asked a doorkeeper, meeting them at the door.

"We don't want ter see anybody, we've com' ter stop 'ere," replied Shorty.

"Is it sthop here?" inquired the attendant, with an astonished look on his face.

"Yes, yes, I suppose you have rooms not occupied," replied Shanks.

"Yes, faix, there's room enough, but——"

"Oh, don't stand dere lookin' as foolish as a Dutch doll; skim off on yer mud treaders an' hunt up somebody dat knows somethin'," interrupted Shorty.

The man moved slowly away, shaking his head and muttering:

"Troth, and thim bates me out intirely, and shure nayther of them seems quare in the head."

Shorty and Shanks were joined in a few moments by a tall, fine-looking old gentleman, who said as he advanced toward them:

"I am in charge of this institution."

"Well, I'se sorter glad ter find somebody dat's in charge of somfin'," said Shorty.

"Did you wish to see me about entering the institution?" asked the gentleman, motioning them to seats.

"Dat's jest wher' yer head's level as a billiard table."

"You know, I presume, the rules and terms?"

"Oh, der terms won't bust us if yer only giv' us good chuck an' beds dat ain't buggy."

"You will have first to be examined by a board of surgeons, who will present me with a statement of your case."

"Examined—surgeons—my case—why, what d'yer pick me up for—a small-pox patient?" exclaimed Shorty.

"No, but we must have evidence of dementia before admission."

"Well, dat's der darnest fraud of a shebang ever I struck; and who is the Demenshur, or whatever yer call him?"

"If we've got to go through all this fol-de-rol nonsense we'd better go to some other hotel at once, but we were directed here by our agent, who advised us by mail that our rooms had been engaged, and everything ready," observed Shanks.

"Hotel?" said the gentleman.

"Yes, hotel, an' a sick one it is, too, wher' yer got ter hav' yer he'd zamin'd 'fore dey lets yer in," answered Shorty.

"Why, gentlemen, are you unaware of the nature of this institution?" asked the manager.

"Ain't it Cruise's Hotel?" inquired Shorty.

"Why, some great mistake has been made; this is the lunatic asylum, and not a hotel," explained the gentleman.

"Lunatic 'sylum, jumping Jehosophat! What a sell!" yelled Shorty, jumping up.

"In a lunatic asylum, great Moses among the bulrushes! I'll murder that cabman!" exclaimed Shanks.

"Why, how could he have made such an outrageous mistake?" said the manager.

A dim idea commenced to float through Shorty's head as to how the mistake occurred, but he said nothing, only inwardly vowed to get square with the kid before he was many days older.

The biggest part of the joke was that no vehicle could be procured, and they were forced to hoof it all the way back to Limerick,

which took them till near night, and on their arrival at the hotel, tired, dusty and footsore, they were mad and hungry enough to first knock down and then eat afterward everybody from the proprietor to the cook.

"Goin' ter scoop in der show, on der half shell ter-nite?" inquired Shorty, after supper.

"Show be hanged! Guess you must pick me up for a walking machine, why I wouldn't walk to the corner if I had a postal card from Saint Peter asking me to relieve him," grumbled Shanks, as he threw him into one chair and stretched his legs out on three others.

"Yer a deuced sight likelier ter get an invitation from der oder an' hotter direction," said Shorty.

"I wish that infernal hackman, and his infernal hack, and his infernal horse, were all thrown in the middle of it, darn his nut-masher mug!" growled Shanks.

"Wonder what made 'im tak' us for a couple of crazys?"

"If I ever run across his ugly old head I'll make him crazy for the balance of his natural life," muttered Shanks, lighting a cigar.

The tent was well filled on the opening night, though nothing like the Dublin and Belfast crowds, yet it was a good paying house and everybody seemed to enjoy themselves as only Irish audiences do the jokes, repartees and gags that they flung at each other, keeping everybody in a roar of laughter as much as the efforts of the clowns. Shorty Junior's riding was of course loudly applauded, as was his clown and minstrel performance. His size, comical actions and queer way of twisting up his funny little face, bringing down the house every time. The mules woke up the boys and nearly a hundred youngsters in Limerick went to bed that night with the proud knowledge of having been rolled in the sawdust by them, and a firm determination to bounce them to-morrow and every night till success was theirs.

Nor was the mule riding confined to the boys, several of the small farmers in the neighborhood of the city, lured on by the magnificent offers held out, flung off their coats and hats and mounting the tricky little beasts, were pitched, rolled on, kicked, bit, and finally sent rolling over and over in the ring.

The minstrel performance took immensely, nothing so good in that line ever having visited that city. Altogether the Limerick boys were enthusiastic, the old people pleased, and everything passed off swimamingly.

After a week of much better houses than Shorty had looked for, he once more gave the order to move, and bidding good-bye to their thousands of Irish friends, they took one of the Royal Mail Line of steamers at Belfast, and steamed away for Glasgow, Scotland, where arrangements had been made for them to appear.

The trip was a stormy one, and Shorty Junior managed to keep everybody in a roar with his cutting up.

It was late when they reached Glasgow, and they were at once driven to their hotel—The Queen's.

CHAPTER XIII.

"Well, what d'yer t'ink of Scotland as far as yer've got?" asked Shorty, as they were seated at breakfast.

"I think it slow enough to want something to pull it around."

"Well, it's jest got der rite t'ing ter haul its purse strings 'f dey's got any," chuckled the kid, placing a plate of hot buckwheat cakes on the chair next to him, and then watching an old gentleman plant himself down, and then raise up as suddenly off them.

"Great thunder! What in the mischief is that darned thing doing there?" demanded the man, as he tried to separate the mashed cakes from the seat of his pantaloons.

"I don't know, sir," gasped the waiter.

"Don't know; hoot mon, I've a mind to break your neck."

"Break my neck! Why, I ain't expected to find eyes for you!" said the waiter, getting wrathy.

"Don't talk back to me! Just look at these pants!"

"What have I to do with your dirty old pants?"

"Dirty, you said!"

"I know what I said!" exclaimed the waiter.

"And so do I, you darned dish-scaper!" shouted the man, and he was making for the waiter when the latter grabbed up a dish of stew and dashed it in his face, plastering him all over and sending him hopping wildly around in his rage, while the kid and Shorty fairly screamed with laughter.

"Where is he? Show him to me!" yelled the man, when he had got the stew out of his eyes and glared around in search of the waiter, whom he discovered climbing under a table.

"Come out of that, you wretch!" screamed the man, and he made a rush for and dived under the table after the waiter.

What occurred under there was never fully ascertained; but there was a sound of desperate scuffling, curses, prayers and yells, and howls enough for a whole menagerie. Then, just as Shorty Junior concluded that they were chewing each other up and swallow-

ing the pieces, there was a crash of broken crockery as the table cloth was jerked off on to the floor, and a badly pounded and worse-scared waiter dashed through the room and out of the door, closely followed by a very greasy, dusty and raging man.

"F dey keeps on runnin' at dat gait dey'll git roun' der world in less dan no time," remarked Shorty, as he jerked his seat back from the table.

"One of dem's mebbe is a good waiter, but he don't wait worth a cent," grinned the son.

"He slid under that table as if he was more skyrocket than man," remarked Shanks, as he left the table and they strolled out of doors.

"Goin' ter trot out yer procession thro' der streets?" asked Shorty, as he set fire to a cigar.

"I'd like ter, cause I t'ink dat it'd help ter draw a full house; but how am I goin' ter when dere's two of my band-wagon hosses lame?" replied the kid.

"How did you do that?"

"Oh, takin' dem off der boat som' of dose hamfatters made a bull's foot of it an' knocked dem 'gainst somfin'."

"Well, I'll get yer a pair of good horses ter put in dere place so yer kin hav' yer parade all ready ter sail," said Shorty, and there was a comical grin on his face that betokened mischief.

"Don't want any ol' boneyards of nags."

"Well, I sorter t'ink I kno's a hoss when I see one."

"All rite, only don't pick out any crow-bait for me."

"Don't yer fret yer insides inter fiddle-strings; I'll tend ter it."

"All O. K. I'se goin' down ter der tent now, so yer kind send dem down wheneber yer wants," answered the kid, starting off.

"Now den, Shanks, I'se jest goin' ter git square wid dat boy for dat lunatic 'sylum job he put up on us," said Shorty, when his son was out of hearing.

"What, you don't mean to say it was him done that?"

"Dat's jest 'zactly der size of what I do mean ter git thro' me."

"Well now, if I wouldn't have warmed him good if I'd have known it—it's a caution," said Shanks.

"Sugar, I tumbled to it when we was out dere but I didn't squeal 'cause I thort I'd jest see 'fi couldn't pay him off in his own fashion, an' now I've got der fust show since den."

"I don't tumble," said Shanks.

"Don't yer, well, keep yer paper collar on for forty seconds, an' I'll explain ter yer."

"Drive ahead."

"Two of his band-wagon plugs is lame, an' I'se ter get 'im order ones, savey? Well, if dere's two kickers ter be had, I'se goin' ter hav' dem, an' 'f yer don't see fun in dat band-chariot, yer kin call me a saphead," explained Shorty, and Shanks entered heartily into his plans.

"You've struck it, chum; won't we get square with a vengeance?" exclaimed Shanks, slapping his little friend on the shoulder.

"Well, le's skate off an' see 'f we kin pick dem up," proposed Shorty, and the pair tramped off, and after asking at the stables, and of the cabman they learned of two that were guaranteed to out-kick a flint-lock musket.

Shorty and Shanks visited them and found them as good and wicked-looking a pair as you could well scare up.

"Good kickin' team, are dey?"

"There never was anything built on four legs that could touch them; why they kick higher, harder and wickeder than all the mules in Glasgow. It would do your heart good to stand around and watch them kick down stone walls, mash up wagons and knock out the sides of houses," said the man, proudly.

"I guess dat dey'll do, den," replied Shorty, and having ordered them sent down to the circus, Shanks and himself started down to see the fun, and arrived there just as the procession was starting out.

First came Shorty Junior, mounted on Buster, followed by the band-chariot and other wagons, ring-horses, members of troupe and trick mules, making altogether a gay and glittering cavalcade.

"I don't half like the appearance of that fresh team; they've got a bad look about the eyes and ears," remarked the driver of the chariot, as he climbed up to his seat.

"Bosh, dey'll work well 'nuff. I told dad to git der best pair he could find, tho' I don't hanker much after hosses dat points der ears at der tails same as dem does," answered Shorty Junior, as he took his place at the head of the parade.

"Well, I be blowed if I ain't going to keep my eyes cocked on that pair, and if they come any of their gum-games you'll see this quince hopping off that box seat like a long-legged prairie grasshopper," said the driver, as he gathered up the reins and followed Shorty up the street.

Everything went off lovely for the first half block, till the band struck up; but at the very first blast of their instruments, four hind heels flew up and out, kicking a hole in the fancifully painted and gilded dash-board big enough to lead a bull calf through.

"Whoa, there, you busters!" yelled the driver, climbing back out of reach of the animals' heels.

"Crack, slam bang!" came the heels again.

"Drive dem ahead an' don't spare dat whip on dem," shouted Shorty Junior.

"Oh, look 'ere, fellers, dere's der circus plugs playin' tag wid dere heels!" sang out a young shaver.

"Toot up yer big horn!"

"Giv' us a tune, ol' wind jammers!"

"Play us a waltz on dat big drum, ol' sheepskin fiddler."

"Hi, look at dem plugs now!"

"Maybe they ain't bosses at the kickin' business!" yelled a crowd of boys.

"Drive on there!" ordered the kid.

The driver leaned over and commenced sailing into that team with the whip, but on the third cut and just as the big drum had given one bang the horses wheeled around short, upsetting the chariot and sending the musicians flying in every direction.

"Der tuyful!" roared the big drum-pounder, as he found himself seated through the bursted drum head.

"Where ish mine horn?" exclaimed the owner of the big horn, as he crawled out of the gutter and rubbed his head.

"My nose is mashed!" cried another, holding on to his bleeding bugle and dancing around on one leg.

Meanwhile the horses, who had wheeled short around were dashing wildly down the line, scattering the procession to the right and left and playing the devil generally.

They were finally stopped and the chariot, which looked like an ice wagon that had been in a collision, set up on its wheels, but the stuffing had been knocked out of the procession for that day, and the performers returned to their tent a badly-used up and demoralized crowd.

"I t'ink we'd better skip," suggested Shorty, who with Shanks had been amused spectators of the whole affair.

"Oh, won't he be wild though, about this racket," remarked Shanks.

"Guess it'll teach 'im dat som'body else kin put up jobs as well as he kin," said Shorty, as they traveled back to the hotel.

A few minutes after their return Shorty Junior put in an appearance, mad all through, over, under and around.

"Dat was a pretty snide job you put up on me!" he exclaimed, going over to his paternal and flinging himself into a chair opposite to him.

"Was it?" asked his daddy, drawlingly.

"What kind of plugs was dem yer sent down ter me?" demanded the kid.

"Well, dey looked ter be four-legged ones."

"I mean, what in darnation made yer send dat team down for?"

"Why, I think dey was 'bout as good a team as der one yer directed ter tak' us ter der lunatic 'sylum," replied Shorty, taking his cigar out of his mouth and blowing a smoke cloud.

"Well, yer square now, I hope, yer've busted der band-chariot an' knocked spots out of der whole machine," said the kid, who saw that the old man not only tumbled to the asylum racket, but also had taken care to get hunk with interest.

"Is dat all?" asked Shorty.

"All!"

"Yee-up, I was in hopes dat dey'd knock a hole thro' der tent an' swaller der baggage wagons."

"Kick over the center pole and step on half the performers," chimed in Shanks.

"Oh, yer giv' us a breeze, legs, I s'pose yer figgered in it bigger den a flag pole," retorted the kid, savagely.

"I'm square," replied Shanks.

"I told yer onced dat I wouldn't hav' any jobs put up on me, now I'll tell yer nuther t'ing; every time yer tries dem on me I'se goin' ter giv' yer a ten times worse racket ter pay up for it, now yer kin roll up in yer cigarette and touch it off wid a lucifer, for I mean biz up ter der handle," said his daddy.

The kid sat a while thinking it over, and then jumping up, observed:

"All rite, I kin tell yer both dat I'se der worst coon in der country ter stay beat. Now, den, we pull out 'ere ter-morrer, so I must try an' hav' der ol' band-buggy patched up."

"Good 'nuff, an' yer better telegraf 'head ter der 'vance agent ter hav' nuther one bilt."

"I will, but I'se goin' ter mak' dis next trip by wagons; I don't want any more hosses knocked ter pieces jest at present," said Shorty Junior.

"Yer kin mak' it by balloon for all dat I care," replied his daddy.

"Dat settles it, an' now I'se off," remarked the kid, going out and shutting the door.

"Goin' ter get hunk on ter me, are dey? Now I don't t'ink dey draws 'nuff water ter beat dis ham on der racketin' lay out," he muttered, as he passed through the street.

Arriving at the circus, he inquired:

"Has dem hosses dat was sent down 'ere ter pull der chariot gon' home yet?"

"No, they're out there in one of the tents yet, darn them!"

grunted a performer, who was holding a piece of raw beefsteak to a black-and-blue eye he had received in the spill.

"Den when der man comes for dem, tell 'im I wants ter see 'im ticklar," said the kid.

In a few minutes the man arrived for his horses, and Shorty Junior and he were closeted for half an hour, at the expiration of which time he had made arrangements with the man to have the horses sheared and their manes and tails cropped and to hire them to him on the day following.

"Guess dere'll be somebody else get a warmin' wid dose plugs, and now for ter tend ter biz," said Shorty Junior, starting out.

The circus was much better attended that evening than any of the former ones. In the first place the runaway match proved a big card and drew a full tent, then again the canny, cautious Scotchmen had been turning their shillings and sixpences over and waiting to hear how others spoke of it before venturing to invest, and having heard it spoken of favorably by everyone, they turned out on the eleventh hour and filled up the place.

There was lots of fun with the money-loving Scotchmen and the mules, when Shorty Junior made the usual liberal offer of a hundred dollars to the person who would ride them; it looked from the number that got up as if half the circus wanted to try their hands; but the number got down to about a dozen after the first few had been rolled and bucked around.

The mules had just been led away, and Shorty Junior was about leaving the ring, when a tall, rawboned Scotchwoman, carrying an immense umbrella and carpet-bag, strode into the ring, and, approaching Shorty Junior, said:

"Fetch back those mules!"

"What yer want dem for?" inquired the kid.

"Ain't my money as good as anybody's money? And what's the reason I ain't going to have a chance at them?" she demanded, while the audience, commencing to see some fun not down on the bills, began laughing.

Suddenly an idea occurred to the kid, and, turning to the woman, he said:

"All rite, marm; yer jest keep on yer t'ings, an' I'll send one of der bosses rite out 'ere ter see yer 'long wid der mules;" and, trotting off, he left her standing in the ring.

"Say, Shanks, dere's somebody out dere 'quirin' for yer," said Shorty Junior, going into his dressing-tent where his daddy and Shanks were seated.

"Why, who in the dickens knows me in this part of the world?" observed Shanks.

"Dunno, only yer'll find out when yer gets out dere, my honey."

"Well, that's queer," said Shanks, throwing away his cigar, and going out into the main tent, where he was immediately buckled on to by the female with—"Have you got anything to do with this here circus?"

"Yes'm a little," answered Shanks, all taken aback by her strange appearance and actions.

"Den you're my shortcake; skim right out here where I can see you!" she exclaimed, clutching him by the arm, and leading him toward the ring.

"But, madam, I can't see what in the world you can want of me," replied Shanks, following her reluctantly.

"Want of you, why, I want to join the circus folks," she said, energetically.

"But I'm afraid we have no position that you could fill," observed Shanks, wondering if the woman was insane.

"Mean to say that you think I can't do any of the stunts them fellers been doing?" she asked.

"Well, yes; it requires a long course of training before either acrobats or riders arrive at any degree of perfection."

"Acro—who?"

"Acrobats; those men who turn somersaults," explained Shanks, vowing inwardly to punch the kid's head for getting him into this scrape.

"And you think that's smart to see a fellow flop over—here, hold on to that satchel and watch me keel over," she answered, thrusting her old carpet-bag upon Shanks, and spitting on her hands, while the audience laughed and encouraged her by shouts of:

"Go it, old gal!"

"Give us a backhander!"

"Pitch in; we bet on you!"

"Don't you let him bluff you!"

"For heaven's sake don't ma'am—don't do it!" exclaimed Shanks, as he saw her making ready for to turn.

"What's the reason I won't?" she asked, fiercely.

"Because—because you know it's only men that attempt such things," gasped Shanks, horrified at the very idea.

"I'll do it, I tell you. I paid to come into this show, and I'm going to flop if I want to!" she exclaimed, and before Shanks could expostulate she had ducked her bonnet down into the sawdust, and kicking up her heels, tumbled over, exposing a considerable portion of a pair of blue woolen stockings with a stout pair of muddy shoes at one end of them.

The audience screamed and applauded, while poor Shanks, with his face the color of scarlet, rushed up to the woman and stammered:

"Really, really, you mustn't do anything like that here."

"Can't flop, hey? How was that for a turn-over?"

"Good enough, ma'am, but you are interrupting the performance."

"Performance, hey?" she interrupted. "Maybe you think I can't perform—hold my bonnet and watch me shin up that center pole. I'll bet you I can get up to the top quicker than a black cat."

"Hold on! Great Moses, you mustn't do such thing," said Shanks, restraining her with difficulty.

"Mustn't, hey? Don't fool too much with me, or I'll slam you down in the sawdust and sit on your head."

"But you must retire."

"I can kick your hat right off and wipe your nose with my foot as I come down and never sweat a drop," she remarked, eyeing poor Shanks aggressively.

"I don't doubt it in the least ma'am, but I wouldn't have you do it for the world!" groaned Shanks, backing away from her.

"Why, what kind of a man are you, anyhow, that don't want to have some fun?"

"Madam, this is—"

"I'll run you a race around the ring, or I'll wrastle you for the first three rolls over!" she broke in.

"Heaven forbid!" exclaimed Shanks, while the lookers on shouted and laughed and the youngsters encouraged her to go ahead.

"Go in lemons!"

"I'll hold your bonnet!"

"Tumble him once, for luck, bonnie Jean!"

"Kick him in the ear!"

"Waltz for him, we'll show you fair play!" yelled the boys.

"Duck your head a little and I'll hop right over you without shaking my bustle," she said, taking off her bonnet and tossing it to Shanks to hold.

"I won't allow it!"

"Oh, you won't! Don't aggravate me by refusing everything I offer to do, for I'm a wild old terror when I'm roused and get to snorting!"

"But you mustn't snort—you must go out and let the performance continue."

"Fetch out those mules again till I show you how to ride them," she snapped.

"No, ma'am, not for a thousand dollars, I wouldn't have you making an exhibition of yourself," said Shanks, when just as he was talking, Shorty Junior and his dad, who had been splitting themselves with laughter, gave the order for the mules to be turned into the ring again, and in they trotted, big as life and twice as ugly.

"You ain't going to make a fool of yourself by trying to ride them," pleaded Shanks. "See here, I'll give you five dollars not to try it."

"Ain't I? That's just where you miss it," she shouted, and making a run she climbed on to the mule, man-fashion, and leaning over, grabbed him around the neck.

"Get!" was all she had time to say, before the mule got, and she struck on her head about ten feet off.

"Hold on, I ain't half licked!" she screamed, as she scrambled up and made for the mule again.

This time she stuck on about one minute and a half by the watch, at the expiration of which time she was shot head first into Shanks' stomach and the two rolled over together in the sawdust.

The woman was the first to rally, and she went with a rush for Shanks' scalp, and by the time the ringmaster, two clowns, and a half a dozen helpers could reach and separate them she had bit his ear, broke a suspender, busted off sixteen buttons and was preparing to jump on to him when they piled on to her and carried her out feet first and kicking like a mule.

"Guess I se hunk on dat feller for his part in der band-wagon business," grinned Shorty Junior as he saw Shanks come limping out, looking as if he had been clawed by a whole menagerie.

But wasn't Shanks mad, and stormed around in search of the kid, who had wisely vanished and was not seen again 'till next morning, by which time Shorty had got Shanks quieted down, though he said, when he met the imp at the breakfast table:

"If I had caught you last night, I'd have fractured every darned bone in your infernal little body."

"Well, dad, whenever you and Shanks git ready we'll settle up our bills 'ere an' pull out," remarked the kid, after they had finished breakfast.

"Are yer all ready?" asked his dad.

"Yer bet yer boots I am."

"Well, I'll hav' ter hop round an' hunt up som' kind of a rig for me an' Shanks ter go off in."

"Yer kin tak' my team 'yer will, an' buggy. I se goin' ter ride Buster ter-day," said the kid, casually.

"All rite, dat'll save us a heap of trouble huntin' 'round," said Shorty, falling into the trap set for him.

"Well, den, le's slide off, for I wants ter get on der road as soon as I kin," remarked the kid, and half an hour later their baggage was packed up and loaded into one of the wagons and they were all ready to start.

"It ain't a bad-looking team," said Shanks, as he got up into the buggy and took his seat.

"Oh, 'f dey're as good as dey looks dey'll do," answered Shorty, jumping in and taking the reins.

"Da-da, Dad, don't drive too fast," laughed the kid.

"I won't; get up—jeminia, jumping, Jerusalem!" yelled Shorty, as the horses suddenly let fly a whole volley of kicks, completely demolishing the front of the buggy, kicking Shanks out and up against a barber-pole.

"Great Mogul, what horses!" exclaimed Shorty, after he had climbed over the back of the buggy and watched the team tearing down the street with the wreck of the buggy at their heels.

"Glad yer like dem, for dey're der same ones yer lent me," grinned the kid, and he dusted away in time to escape a brickbat his dad hurled at him.

CHAPTER XIV.

There was a rattling old excitement over the smashup. The horses dashing madly down the street with the front wheels of the buggy trailing after them, collided with and upset barrels, boxes, sign-boards and everything they could reach, ran over mewing cats, yelping dogs and half the old people in the streets. Then crowds of men came rushing up to the scene of the disaster, each bearing a small fragment of the late buggy; another small crowd were gathering Shanks up and pouring water over him, putting cold hardware down his back, rubbing his nose to bring him back to a sufficient state of consciousness, that he might be able to count his bruises. Around Shorty was gathered another excited group, anxious to learn the particulars in the unfortunate affair, while just outside the circle was the very wrathful and anxious owner of the buggy, dancing around in a state of perspiration and agony to learn where he was to get paid for his broken vehicle. Then the band tooted up to add to the confusion. horses neighed, small boys yelled, and cheered, and the cavalcade, under the direction of one of the leading performers, whom Shorty Junior had appointed to take charge, moved away.

"Was it an earthquake?" whispered Shanks, opening his eyes and gazing around vacantly.

"No," answered one of the men, who was burning feathers.

"Lightning strike me?" moaned Shanks, getting up and letting all the horseshoes and hardwares that had been thrown down his back drop down his legs.

"Not much."

"Then I must have had a fit, didn't I?" asked Shanks.

"No, no, horses kicked the front of the buggy in, ran away, pitched you out, and jammed your head up against this barber-pole. Then they dashed down the street, burst up the rest of the wagon, and killed and crippled half the city," explained a gentleman.

"Ah, yes, it comes over me like a horrid dream, kicking horses, broken wagon, and myself flying through the air," gasped Shanks.

"That's about the way it stands up to date" replied the other.

"And my companion that was in the wagon with me?"

"A little short runt of a feller?"

"Yes, yes, what of him?"

"Oh, he's over there trying to find somebody to lick. Lightning wouldn't kill that feller."

Shanks made his way over to Shorty.

"The first thing now is to hunt up a turnout," he remarked.

"Yes, 'cept yer want ter tak' a seat in der band-wagon, or ride one of der mules," replied Shorty.

"I came deuced near taking a ride in a hearse a while ago."

"Den dey'd hav' ter bild one longer dan dey've got, or else let yer feet stick out of der tail-board, 'sides yer wasn't near dead, yer was only sufferin' from a severe 'tack of horse-ness which soon healed up," joked Shorty, as they jogged along.

"You did not fall on your head, did you?" asked Shanks, stopping suddenly and laying his hands on his little friend's shoulder.

"No. Why?"

"Nothing, only I thought you were a little cracked on top when I heard you getting off those medical puns."

"Oh, yer be hanged!" laughed Shorty.

After hunting around a little, they came across a livery stable and succeeded in securing a turnout.

"Now, den, we'll tak' to der road, as the highwayman said," observed Shorty, as they drove smartly off.

About two miles out of the city they overtook the circus with Shorty Junior riding at its head as calm as a summer morning, and as cool as a frozen cucumber.

"By Saint George and the Dragon, if that ain't him! Oh, just wait till I lay my hands on him!" exclaimed Shanks, excitedly.

"Cheese it, pard, an' don't yer t'ink of lickin' 'im, jest leave it ter me, an' if we don't pay 'im up yer kin pickle me for a nasturtion," said Shorty, quickly.

"But—but you don't expect that I'm going to be——"

"Hist, drop on yerself; I told yer I'd git square, an' yer've know'd me ter long ter want me ter mak' an' affidaver dat fact. Jest play off dat yer spicion nuthin', an' I'll giv' dat kid a sock-dolager in return for dis," whispered Shorty, as they drove up.

"Hello, governor, how's yer eye teeth? We gates, Legs, der last time I seed yer, yer was tryin' ter butt down a barber's pole," said Shorty Junior, cheekily, as they drove up.

"Dat man yer got dat team from stuck yer awfully, Chips," replied his dad, quietly.

The kid took a long look at his paternal, but there was nothing there to give him away, and he was wondering whether the old man really hadn't tumbled, when Shorty said:

"By der way, I picked up a couple of hundred cases for dat buggy ter der bloke dat owned it, an' I've docked it out of der money of yer's I hav' on hand."

Shorty Junior winced a little, but after a minute, came up smiling to the scratch and said:

"Dat was rite, dad."

"Wher' d'yer feed at?" asked Shorty.

"Dere ain't no place 'cept Falkirk, so we'll put up dere," answered the kid.

"Well, I guess Shanks an' me'll pike ahead, yer fellers kick up ter much dust for Christians," said Shorty, pleasantly.

"See dat dey git up som' good ol' chuck for dis crowd," called out the kid after them as they drove off.

"Yer bet I will, in a hog's eye; now for der fust pay-back for dat racket," muttered Shorty.

"How?" inquired his chum.

"I'll show yer; yer jest glue yerself ter me an' I'll work it."

Arriving at Falkirk they found that place only boasted of one hotel—the Red Lion—to which Shorty at once drove, and after putting up his horses and ordering a sumptuous dinner for two, he called the landlord aside and said:

"We belong ter der secret police force of Glasgow, an' are sent down dis way ter warn yer 'gainst a circus company dat's comin' long. Dey're not ter be admitted ter any of der hotels, as dere is small-pox an' oder diseases 'mong dem. Pay no 'tention ter what dey say, an' above all, at yer peril don't tell dem der reason yer won't tak' dem."

The landlord was profuse in his thanks, swore they wouldn't have a mouthful from his place.

"Den, hurry up our chuck, for we've got ter be scootin' ter warn others," said Shorty, and the landlord hurried away.

After a hearty, but hastily-eaten dinner, Shorty and Shanks drove away, stopping at the Chief Magistrate's office, who, after hearing the same story, instantly ordered out his entire force of constables with orders that the wicked, infectious band then approaching the town and known as the Yankee Boy's Circus, should not be allowed to tarry in the town.

"An' now le's kite 'long ter der nex' stoppin' place an' put up a der job dere; I guess som' of dat crowd'll hav' ter go hungry ter drink," grinned Shorty.

"No use talking, up hill or down, it takes the old man to put up a racket, and play a lone hand against the deck," replied Shanks, admiringly.

Not quite an hour after their departure, Shorty Junior and his mammoth circus company arrived, hungrier than wolves, after their long ride.

"Hello! Dis looks 's if we was goin' ter hav' a reception, I s'pect dad's been puffin' us up," mused the kid, as the party approached him.

"You're to pass directly through this town without stopping," said the leader.

"Der dickens yer say! What's der matter wid yer?" exclaimed Shorty Junior, all taken aback.

"No, it's the chief magistrate's orders."

"It's all the same," said the kid.

"So please move on with your wagons."

"But we've got ter hav' som' grub," protested Shorty Junior.

"No, you can't, the hotel and people have all been warned against having you in their houses, and you'll have to go on."

"Well, if this ain't a lark," muttered Shorty Junior, and he gave the order to move on, while the company's faces dropped, as they saw the prospect of their hot dinner going up the spout.

Stopping opposite the Red Lion Hotel, Shorty Junior drove up to the door, and hailing the landlord, asked:

"Will yer giv' us somthin' ter eat 'fi pay yer double for it?"

"Not a mouthful, you can't come inside these doors!" replied the landlord growing pale.

"Say, was dere two gentlemen 'ere dis mornin', one tall an' one short?" asked the kid.

"Yes, and had the best in the house."

"Dat settles it, sold, by jingo! Oh, I tell yer, dat ol' man of mine is a rattler!" exclaimed the kid, admiringly, as he rode slowly away, followed by his hungry-eyed company.

Outside the town Shorty Junior halted and fed and watered his horses, while the men skirmished off among the farm-houses in search of chuck of any kind.

"Dad's got me foul an' nixy mistake. Well, I don't ha'f mind bein' sold 's long as 'tain't no slouch puts up der racket. Mebbe I won't git hunk when I gits der chance," soliloquized the kid, as they started off once more, bound this time for Linlithgow, twenty odd miles from Glasgow, and where they were to put up for the night.

The journey was a long, hungry, dusty and dry one, and everyone glad all through when they struck Linlithgow.

"Thank goodness an' der Constitution of der United States, I telegraphed ahead for quarters 'ere," said the kid to himself, as he drove up in front of the Star and Garter Hotel—the only in the place—and on the platform of which was seated Shorty and Shanks.

"Hello, got 'long dis far!" sang out Shorty.

"Been expecting you some time, guess you must have had fish for dinner and stopped to pick the bones," called out Shanks.

"Oh, yer fellers played it fine on ter me, but I don't squeal, only I'm 'bout starved ter death," replied the kid.

"Sorry, sir, but we can't accommodate you and your company at this hotel," said the landlord, coming to the door.

"Now, see 'ere, dis t'ing's played out; yer don't s'pose I'se goin' ter starve or sleep out on der ground when dere's a hotel ter be found," answered Shorty Junior.

"Sorry, sir, not only all the rooms taken, but strict orders from the Chief of Police preventing me from harboring you or any of your company."

"But what in der name o' General Jackson hav' I done?" demanded the kid.

"Not allowed to state, sir—very sorry, but really impossible."

"Impossible, yer grandmother! Now I'm jest goin' ter stop 'ere an' get one supper or I'll fetch der whole kick-an'-bang of my fellers up an' bust dis shebang ter pieces."

"I fancy you won't go to such extremes, young man," said a voice, and a door opening, about twenty or thirty armed constables and several files of soldiers marched out.

"Der jig's up. Le's find a spot ter go inter camp. Dad, dat counts you two keno's on ter me ter-day!" exclaimed Shorty Junior, and he turned Buster's head away, and sought other quarters.

"Dere's der second shot ter peg up for dat hoss kickin' racket. Guess he won't try ter euchre der ol' man widout he's got both bowers, an' der ace in his hand."

The next morning, Shorty Junior, who had been in camp all night, took an early start, and they were half way on their journey when Shorty and Shanks overhauled them.

"How's t'ings, Chips, any skeeters las' nite at yer hotel?" inquired Shorty, with a grin.

"Wasn't many bedbugs, was there?" asked Shanks.

"All rite, mebbe yer won't allers hav' der laf' on dat side of yer mouf," replied the kid, as he wheeled Buster's rear around, and touching him with his heels in the flanks, that animal hoisted up and kicked the top off the buggy with one clip.

"Hol' on, I'll shoot 'im!" shouted Shorty, as he got his horses out of reach of Buster's heels.

On their arrival in Edinburgh, they were surprised to find that the Royal English Circus had arrived that day and pitched their tent.

At the Balmoral Hotel they found that their advance agent had secured for them a choice suite of rooms, and done all he could toward guaranteeing them a good reception.

"Goin' ter hoist der canvas, an' open der show ter-nite?" inquired Shorty, as they sat at the dinner table.

"Dat's my 'tentions 'f I ever git 'nuff vittles hid away under my clothes, ter fill up der hole made by dat starvation racket yer played on ter me," answered the kid.

"Why didn't you eat donkeys?" codded Shanks.

"'Cause we didn't hav' yer 'long," retorted Chips.

"Wonder what kind of a gang dat Johnny Bull's got?" said Shorty, musingly.

"The Royal English is considered strong by the profession," remarked Shanks, quietly.

"'F dey only play me a square game, I'd giv' dem a dozen on der string an' beat dem, but 'f dey plays a bum game on ter me dea yer'll see t'ings git up an' howl," observed the kid, getting up from the table and rolling a cigarette.

"T'ink dat dey mean ter hurrah yer?" asked his dad.

"Wouldn't trust dem furder dan I could sling a bull by der tail."

"Well, all we kin do is ter peel our eyes, an' if we kin strike on ter any shenanagen goin' on, why giv' it der gran' bounce."

"Dat's what's der matter, an' now I must schottishe down an' git dat tent up. Want ter go down, or got somfin' else ter do?" asked the kid.

"I'll pike down, I t'ink, dere ain't nuff goin' on up 'ere ter keep a bumble bee busy," replied his dad.

"And I haven't half as much to do as a first-class tramp, and he's got less than nothing," observed Shanks, and the three started off.

They were walking down High street when they came across a farmer driving a large drove of hogs which appeared to wish to go in nine hundred and twelve different directions to the one they were wanted to go.

"Ere comes a ham-fattin' troupe, now," laughed the kid.

"Dey ort ter be barkeepers dey've so much s-wine 'bout dem," joked Shorty.

Whether Shanks would have got off any joke on the subject, the public will never learn, for just at that moment an enormous boar gave a wicked grunt, and switching off from the rest of the drove, made a bolt for Shanks, rushed between his legs, upsetting and carrying him off on his back, while Shorty roared with laughter, and the ever-mischievous kid set a big Newfoundland dog barking after them.

"Hi! Here! Stop him!" shouted Shanks, as he found himself being carried over the ground at a hog-gallop.

Two or three men rushed out and swung their hats at the boar, but he dodged them and bore away his load in triumph, dumping him finally in a muddy gutter, from which he was resurrected by some of the citizens before Shorty could get up.

"Thort yer was goin' ter play Mazeppa, and wanted ter practise som' bareback ridin'," remarked Shorty, as he handed him back his hat.

"An' I'll be dog-oned 'fi didn't t'ink yer had som' pig t'ing on hand when I seed yer move off," chuckled the kid.

"Oh, yes, mighty funny, ain't it? But I'll tell you one thing, if I could have only turned myself into an explosive torpedo about that time I'd have filled this street with pieces of blown up hog," said Shanks, harshly, as he wiped as much mud as he could off himself with his handkerchief.

"F yer'll do dat act in der circus I'll giv' yer fifty dollars a nite an' a benefit," chaffed Shorty Junior.

"How much 'll you give me a night to teach a cub to keep his tongue between his teeth?"

"Don't t'ink dat it'd draw half as well as hog an' Shanks," replied the kid, and as much of the surplus mud as could be got rid of having been scraped off they started again, and an hour later the Yankee Boys' Circus with its hundreds of fluttering banners and crowned by two glorious Stars and Stripes, was once more ready for business.

That night there was a fair house to witness the opening performance, and although it was far from being a jam, still the seats were comfortably filled, and the receipts were large enough to put our party in high spirits. The opening entry passed off quietly, though Shorty Junior fancied, as he rode out of the ring, that several hisses and groans had somehow got mixed up in the applause.

"Ho, what a sick lot of tumblers!" sang out a voice, when the carpet had been spread and the acrobats had made their appearance.

"You'd better take a tumble to yourself or we'll pitch you right through the tent," said one of the clowns that was out.

"Don't know whether you would or not."

"Another fresh cake that needs the night air," retorted the clown, pointing him out.

"Go on wid dere show, I'll tend ter dere funny fellows," directed the kid, who, anticipating a racket, had slipped into one of the clown's rigs and entered the ring at this moment.

"Oh, look at the pill that's going to attend to a man," yelled another voice.

"Yer ain't a man, yer coal-box snoozer, an' yer'll find dat der pill don't 'ave ter be as big as der man ter mak' 'im sick," answered Shorty Junior, so pertly that the audience applauded and the boys—always the kid's friends—shouted:

"Put him out."

"Bounce him!"

"Slap a gag in his mouth!"

"Put a tin ear on him!"

"Kick the head off him, some of you fellows up there."

"Don't yer mind der mush-head, fellers; dere's a gang of dem from dat red-coat circus 'ere, an' dey wants ter kick up some muss 'cause dey know dey've a snide show 'longside of dis one, 'f dey give me haf a show for my moss agate," said Shorty Junior, turning to the audience.

There was a clapping of hands when the kid finished, and cries of:

"Go on; we'll see you through."

"Let us see them try it."

"Let them go out if they don't want to see the fun."

"Hang their old show, we want to see this one."

"An' yer will see dis one 'f it takes ter der middle of nex' month ter git thro'; dat's der kind of a Yankee buckwheat cake I am!"

exclaimed Shorty Junior, as he took his place among the acrobats and started up lots of fun and laughter by his comical pranks and capers.

"Now den, dad, yer goin' ter see der racket if dey play it ter-nite," remarked Shorty Junior, as he dressed in his bareback-act rig.

"T'ink so?"

"Sure, 'cause me bein' der boss, I'se der one ter play it on. an' dey all kno' dat Buster's more skittish than a hungry flea, so dey'll racket it 'bout dis time, or I'm a heap mistaken," replied the kid.

"Den Shanks yer tak' a dozen of der stake pounders, and polka ter der left side of der tent, an' I'll vesuvianna ter der rite wid a dozen more canvas wollopers, an' we'll jerk dis bizness bald-headed," remarked Shorty, picking up a good thick club.

"I'm off with my army, and I've given orders to jump right through the first man that squeals," said Shanks, as he strode away with his men.

"Buster, ol' boy, I want yer ter jest be as good ter-nite as der boss boy of a Sunday-school, 'cause yer an' me'll likely git a gran' whoop-em-up an' 'f yer sour on me, der jig's up an' dey've won," whispered Shorty Junior, reaching up and patting Buster's arched neck.

"Here he comes!" was the cry, as Shorty Junior came into the ring, and after bowing, took his place on Buster's back; as he did so, he tumbled to several men getting up and going out.

"I'se in for it," he muttered, as he let Buster dash around the ring like wild, while he went through his different bareback feats.

"I don't t'ink I'd try der standin' up bizness ter-nite 'f I was yer, Chips," whispered Shorty, as the kid halted for a second to give Buster breath.

"What, an' let dem snoozers t'ink dey'd giv' me der gran' bluff! Not much, ol' hoss, I ain't dat kind of a peanut, I'll ride it out 'f it's der las' tim' I climb a hoss," replied the kid, gamely, and the music striking up, he started off again at a gallop, and a moment later had sprung to his feet and was balancing himself, when the canvas was suddenly lifted at a dozen places and as many live, squeaking, squealing, grunting hogs were turned loose into the circus.

Of course all was uproar and laughter in a minute, as the hogs darted here and there, upsetting people. Quick as a flash Shorty Junior dropped on to Buster's back just in time to prevent himself being flung headforemost to the ground, as Buster made a quick swerve to the right when he heard the strange noise and saw one of the beasts dash across the ring.

"Keep yer seats, all hands! It's only a lot of der Royal English Circus troupe com' over ter visit us!" exclaimed Shorty Junior, wittily, and his quiet self-possession prevented what might have been a panic.

Five minutes later Shorty and Shanks with their men had succeeded in bouncing the last porkish intruder, and the performance proceeded smoothly enough to the close after that.

After a week of unsuccessful rivalry, and toward the close of which the Royal English were playing to half-empty seats, while the Yankee Boy's Circus kept crowded nightly, Shorty Junior gave the order to strike tent and once more take the road, this time bound for Paris, France.

The journey was a long, but pleasant one, and they arrived at the gay and festive, naughty but nice, French capital.

CHAPTER XV.

Our party were luxuriously quartered at the Grand Hotel on the Boulevard des Capucines, for Shorty and Shanks were always determined upon stopping at the best hotel the city had, regardless of expense, believing in good beds and chuck if they were to be had for love of money.

"Talk 'bout yer red-hot, wide-awake, cream-laid towns, but dis is der spot dat tops dem all off," exclaimed the kid, as he set down his cup of coffee royal.

"It's tip-top, with a tiger nailed on the top of it; no beefsteak 'bout dat. Why, dere's more shows runnin' den yer kin shake a stick at, an' red hot, an' still a heatin' at dat," replied his dad.

"One of der fellows dat run der Imperial French Circus give me tickets for a masked ball at the Jardin Mabille. I'll bet dat'll be a snifty ol' lay-out," said Shorty Junior.

"Yer bet. How many tickets d'yer get?"

"Nuff for yer, an' Shanks, an' me."

"At the Jardin Mabille, hey?"

"Dat's what's der matter."

"We'll have ter look out for rigs, I s'pect, 'fore nite."

"Yee-up."

"All rite; we'll be hunky dory ready."

"Comin' out now?"

"Course we can't 'ford ter stick in der house in a place like dis; dere's too much fun goin' on all der time," said Shorty.

They were going down the Rue de Rivoli, when a fellow jostled the kid, and the next moment the kid had ducked his head and butted him in the bread-basket, knocking him over and upsetting a hot chestnut vender's furnace.

"Mille tonnerres," yelled the man, as he burnt his head in the charcoal furnace.

"Oh, sacre, all mine chestnuts!" shouted the chestnut vender.

"What for you run into me?"

"Oh, sacre! Mine chestnuts!" cried the vender, and he sailed into the other, who was moving off, and grabbing him by the coat, let him have a couple of solid old rib crackers.

"Giv' it ter 'im, Frenchy!"

"Slam 'em on der eye-brow for me!"

"F yer kin get a couple in on his bugle, I t'ink yer'll weaken 'em!"

"Don't yer butt 'im below der belt!"

"Fen kickin's!"

"Fite fair!"

"Go in, ol' chestnuts, I'll stick ter yer!"

"Fry an' wool 'im, Frenchy!"

"Waltz 'round 'im an' paste 'im in der ear," cried Shorty, and the kid and some others, who had gathered to see the fight.

The chestnut vender, smarting under the loss of his goods, and urged on by the remarks of Shorty and party, fought like a tiger, and had succeeded in totally changing the appearance of the other man's features by blacking both eyes, swelling his nose to twice the usual size, scratching one side of his face till he looked as if he had been clawed by a tiger, and pulling out all the front hair he could get hold of.

This the other paid back to him by bumping him up in scientific prize-fighting manner till it was hard to tell if he was a chestnut vender or a hundred and twenty pounds of raw beef and torn clothing. The arrival of the gensd'armes brought peace and two arrests, Shorty Junior and his dad and Shanks sliding out about that time.

"It'll take about seven lawyers, half a ton of bad French, and a heap of cussing to even get that case straightened out," said Shanks, as they moved away.

"Got yer canvas spread yet?" asked Shorty.

"I t'ink so. I tole der fellers ter turn demselves loose and run her up," answered the kid.

"Ain't you going to have any street starmboodle?" inquired Shanks.

"Don't t'ink I will, tho' I may; yer see dis town ain't lik' any of yer ha'f ded an' ha'f live lay into; dey means biz 'ere, an' if yer got a great show I'll bet yer git a red-hot ol' crowd widout any tramping, but if 'tain't good yer better shut up shop an' pull out, for yer won't ketch a fly; now I ain't afraid of my gang, an' I'll take der risk of a good house widout der flamdoode of a show roun' der streets," remarked Shorty Junior, after a pause.

"Where've you got your animals all this time?" asked Shanks.

"Oh, they're down in a big building by der depot, kicking der shins off each other."

"Dey ort ter be fetched up," suggested Shorty.

"I kno' but yer got ter git som' kin' of a permit from der perlice, so I never took der trouble," answered the kid.

"Well, I got one dis mornin' for yer, so we'd better go down an' start dem 'long."

"One way's as good as another," said Shanks, and they started off for the depot, when they found the gensd'armes keeping about five hundred youngsters from peeping in through the cracks.

"Oh, look at the donkeys, ain't they funny?"

"Sacre! Look at the big black horse."

"And viola the ponies."

"Ain't they sweet just."

"An' ain't them pretty horses with the spots all over them?" exclaimed the children, as they gathered in groups around where the horses were kept, while a couple of pompous gensd'armes paraded up and down and kept order.

"Now den, men, git hold of dat stock and jerk 'em up ter der tent," directed Shorty Junior.

The employes went to work with a will, and soon the whole stock were on the way except the mules.

"I'll tak' dem," said the kid, and unloosing the halters, he was leading them off followed by an immense crowd of children shouting and laughing, when one of the gensd'armes touched him on the shoulder and said:

"Garcon, can't allow all zis crowd in and around here; you'll have to have them mules led by someone that won't attract so much attention."

"I ain't got anybody; mebbe yer can lead them yerself?"

"Giv' one ze ropes, I cannot low ze people to collect," said the two gensd'armes as they seized hold of them.

Now, everybody knows that a Paris gensd'armes is a sort of half

policeman and half soldier, is as pompous as a turkey gobbler, dignified as a poker and as airish as a woman's new bonnet.

"Mebbe ye'd tak' dem long yerself, seein' as yer ain't doin' nothin'," said Shorty, quietly.

"Giv' me one of them, and give me the other," they exclaimed, taking hold of the mule's halters.

They got along first rate for the first half block, but just then one of the mules got to jerking around suddenly with his left hind leg, and the gensd'armes was observed to skin around on one foot, and then set down on the edge of the curbstone. While the other, after receiving a battery of kicks, leaned over a fence railing with an agonized expression of countenance, and begged somebody to shoot him at once and put him out of misery.

"I t'ink yer'd better let me tote dem donkeys; we're better 'quainted, an' dey ain't reachin' out to see what dey kin pick up wid me."

The gensd'armes surrendered the halters, with a thoughtful expression of countenance, to the kid, who led them laughingly away.

That evening there was a ripping good house to see the show, and the performers, being on their ear, did their level best and astonished even the Parisians, who were not slow in returning their full meed of applause.

As soon as Shorty Junior could slip away he started off with Shorty and Shanks for the masked ball at the Jardin Mabille.

"Now, den, mind your eye, an' don't 'lope wid any of der pretty gals," said the kid, as they hailed a hack and drove down to the Jardin.

"Tickets, messieurs," said the ticket-taker, as they followed a party into the brilliantly-lighted and gaily-gotten up garden, in the center of which was a large dancing platform upon which hundreds of gay figures were whirling, pirouetting and dancing.

Knights, ballet-girls, clowns, vivandiers, kings, flower-girls, organ-grinders, dukes, pages, court-justices, dancers, nuns, old men, priests, acrobats, soldiers, sailors, and hundreds of other fancy costumes, all twirling, promenading and mingling with each other, formed a gay and glittering display.

"Le's hav' a bottle of wine 'fore we joins in der dance," suggested Shorty Junior, and beckoning a waiter they were soon lying back at one of the tables, sipping iced champagne, and looking around them at the gay scene.

"By Jove! I tell you, this is jest old hypercoon on a half shell," exclaimed Shanks, as he gazed around.

"Why don't yer promenade?" asked Shorty.

"That's just what I'm thinking about," and the next moment Shanks was gamboling around in tow with a young girl gaily dressed as a page.

"Go it, Legs!" sang out the kid, as he saw the page and Shanks start into a high old can-can, and the latter was everlastingly dancing for all he knew how when his fair partner twisted herself around on one toe and kicked his hat off with the other, while Shorty and the kid roared with laughter.

"Dat's can-can for yer," said Shorty.

"Yer bet she can-can skip wid any of dem, an' I'll tell yer ol' Shanks ain't no slouch wid his legs," answered the kid.

"S'posen me an' yer 'slip out an' git on our monkey rigs; I t'ink we can hav' a racket."

"I'm wid yer ol' man, an' skate off on yer ear."

Shorty Junior and his dad stepped out, hailed a hack, and in half an hour were back again, dressed in their monkey rigs, and with another suit over them, and leaving their other traps in the private dressing-rooms, they joined the dancers and soon were head over heels in fun and mischief.

Seated in a quiet arbor, were a pair of young lovers; these the young imp spotted, and slipping around behind their rustic chair, awaited developments.

"And you really love me, Angelina?"

"How can you ask me, Adolphus?"

"Let me clasp thy dainty hand, my love?" pleaded Adolphus, and the kid slipped his hairy paw into his hand.

"Why—why—Angelina?"

"Well, my love?"

"What—what's the matter with your hand?" asked the lover, as Shorty Junior slipped his paw into theirs.

"Why, nothing."

"Yes, theré is; come, let me embrace you once, my charmer. Oh, Lord!" he exclaimed, as the figure of Shorty, dressed in monkey rig, glided between him and his love.

"Ha—ha—ha!" chattered the kid, and grabbing up Adolphus' new silk hat, he jammed it on and went bounding away, followed by the bare-headed and excited young man.

Shorty Junior led him around among the dancers, getting him mixed up in sets, and kicked and cuffed, then across where the dancers were thickest and where he was either tripping over or being tripped every third second.

"Here, what do you mean, plunging around here? This is the second time you've run into me!" exclaimed a big soldierly-dressed

man, and he twisted Adolphus around, kicked him in the rear, pulled his ears and shook him till his heels rattled on the floor.

"But—my hat—my hat!" gasped the unfortunate man.

"Ah, go take a rest! Do you suppose the whole pleasure of this party is to be destroyed for the evening by a dirty old hat of yours?" roared the military-looking gentleman, and he kicked Adolphus half-way across the platform in his wrath.

After enjoying themselves in the hunkiest old kind of a manner till near daybreak, they left, and, hailing a hack, were driven back to their hotel.

CHAPTER XVI.

Though it was near morning when our party turned in, still Shorty Junior was up at his usual time and after gazing a moment at his snoring dad and Shanks, he dressed himself, then gathering several newspapers he spread them over the sleepers, and placing all the chairs and light furniture he could find in the room around the bed, he set fire to the papers, gave one yell of fire and lit out.

Shorty and Shanks were awakened out of their sound slumbers by the cry, to find themselves all in a blaze, gave a wild yell of terror and sprang from the bed only to tumble over and roll around the floor in the embrace of chairs, stools and tables.

"Great Moses!" yelled Shanks.

"Great Scott!" shouted Shorty.

"I'm all on fire!"

"I've got the toe of a rocking chair in my ear!"

"I'm burning up!"

"Take this table leg out of my back!"

"I'm kicking all the skin off myself!"

"Darn this infernal wash-stand; I've poured a gallon of water over myself!" roared Shanks.

"Where's the kid?"

"My head's on fire!"

"And my heel's burnt!"

"Confound it, there goes my big toe-nail against that bureau!"

"Oh, don't talk, ain't I mashing myself all to pieces over here!" exclaimed Shanks, as he finally climbed out and stood in his night-shirt, a sooty, bruised, scared and mad-looking specimen of humanity.

"See my night-shirt, all scorched!" he demanded.

"Oh, hang yer nite-shirt, feel of my head where the wool's all burnt off and look at my black and blue shins."

"And if I hadn't got out as I did I'd have been burnt to a cinder."

"An' wouldn't I have been layin' there toastin' 'fi hadn't skipped lively?"

"Do you think that was some of the kid's work?" inquired Shanks, as he rubbed his lacerated shins with arnica.

"Don't t'ink anyting 'bout it, cause it smells jest like one of his rackets all over," replied Shorty, examining his bruises.

"Then I vote that we go for him bald-headed, for I'll be hanged if I care about being burnt up before my time comes."

"Dere's no use buckin' 'gainst der kid, 'cause he's bound ter hav' his racket 'f he died for it. Der only way is ter watch yer pop, an' when yer kin git der drop on him, den play 'im for all yer kno' how," said Shorty.

"All right, only I dislike being a baked corpse, when I come on to Paris to have some fun," replied Shanks, as he proceeded to get himself into his clothes.

"Yer didn't get any wus scare den I did. Why, when I woke up an' seed myself blazin' up like a Roman candle, I thort it was der mornin' of der las' day, an' I was in a heavenly firework shop," said Shorty, comically, as he fixed himself up for the day.

After one of those delicious little breakfasts such as one only gets in Paris, Shorty and Shanks adjourned to the smoking-room.

"Ah, ol' folks, bon jour. I breakfasted a little early dis mornin', and didn't wait for you. Hope der sweet songs of der little birds woke ye," remarked the kid, coolly, as he sauntered into the smoking-room and lit a cheeroot for himself.

"Great Jupiter! Did you want to roast me alive?" cried Shanks, excitedly.

"Why, den yer'd only been roast Shanks, an' dat's a favorite dish."

"I'll make a favorite dish out of a cowhide and your body, and we'll call it skinned kid," growled Shanks.

"I'se 'fraid I'd be rare and skin out."

"Well, don't yer risk it, or yer'll t'ink yer been thro' a whole slaughter house. As for me, der nex' time yer wants ter mak' a bonfire outer yer ol' man, jest drop 'im a postal card, so as he kin kinder settle up t'ings in dis world," said Shorty, quietly.

"All rite, dad, only I was 'fraid yer was sorter over-sleepin' yerself, an' dat I'd giv' yer a rustle."

"Good 'nuff, only yer don't want ter let yer eyes glue demselves ter tite-shut any ef dese comin' mornin's, or yer may t'ink ye've been in a firework 'splosion."

"Nuff sed. Now le's skin out an' tak' in a little of dis city."

Why, dere's more fun spoilin' for som' feller ter pick it up dan yer kin shake a stick at."

They called a hack, and were driven on a sight-seeing tour around the city, and then drove back to the hotel for their dinner.

"Don't talk; I'se hungry 'nuff ter eat a sojer coat wid der brass buttons on it," remarked Shorty, as he fixed himself up a little before dinner.

"And I'm so hungry I don't know my own name," observed Shanks.

"We won't wait for der kid."

"No; what he wanted to get out at that confounded bird store street for I can't see."

"Bizness, I'se pose; but le's go down and taste t'ings," suggested Shorty, and they went down to the table, where, a few moments after they were seated, they were joined by the kid, who simply remarked he had stopped to purchase some things he required.

"Twan't anything in the grub line, I'll bet on that, from the way you pile into the victuals," remarked Shanks.

"Is Mr. Shanks here?" inquired a waiter, approaching the table, politely.

"Yes, that's my name."

"Shall I show all ze people into your room?"

"People? What people?"

"Oh, ze people zat wish to see you; I have show a dozen into ze room already."

"To see me?"

"Oui; zey all ask for you, and zey all have dese birds long wiz dem, dey makes ze great noise," said the waiter, bowing and grinning.

"Birds, what do I know about birds?"

"It is not for me to tell ze gentleman what he knows, but when he has finished his dinner, he will zee zem for himself in ze room."

"It's some infernal mistake, and I'll soon find out about it," exclaimed Shanks, jumping up from the table and making his way to his room, which he found full of people, each bearing a big jabbering parrot, and insisting upon giving to the nearly frantic Shanks a full and elaborate description of the merits and accomplishments of their parrots.

"Zis parrot is one of ze most remarkable parrots in Paris, he speaks lik' ze great peoplé and canze de manze tricks," said a tall moustached Frenchman, sticking a green parrot with a red head in Shanks' face.

"Get out of here before you get bounced."

It took half an hour to get rid of people with parrots, the majority leaving under protest.

That evening as our party were seated in their room smoking, before going down to the circus, there was a knock at the door, and a stout, muscular, heavily-built man entered, strode across the room to Shanks, and catching hold of the chair in which Shanks was seated, lifted it clean from the floor, much to the latter's dismay, who exclaimed:

"Here, hang it, hold on!"

"Pshaw, that's nothing; I'm the Giant-muscled Hercules of the Northern Hemisphere."

"I don't care what you are; you leave me alone," said Shanks, grumbly.

"Not heard of the steel-thewed, iron-corded, strong man of the North, who can catch cannon balls as they are fired from a gun, break rocks with a stroke of my fist, fell a bullock with a single blow, and tear up trees by the roots. Here, man, I'm going to hold you up to the ceiling!" exclaimed the newcomer, and grabbing Shorty, he set him on his hand and lifted him up to full arm's length, much to our little friend's astonishment and disgust.

"Here's strength! Here's muscular development! Here's Samson born again!" he shouted, throwing off his old tattered coat, and catching up Shorty Junior he tossed him from one hand to the other, as if he had been a hand-ball, throwing him over his back and around his neck, the kid scrambling and kicking for dear life all the time.

"There's muscle!" said the giant, as he lifted up the table with his teeth, carried it across and deposited it and half a gallon of spilt water on Shank's knees.

"Here, what in thunder are you trying to do?"

"Bet you don't know me half yet," said the strong man, and he piled the sofa, bureau and wash-stand in a pyramid and then tossed Shorty up on top of them.

"Get me down, out of this!" screamed Shorty, from his elevated position.

"Now, I'll throw you right up after him," proposed the strong man to Shanks.

"No, I'll be hanged if you do!" exclaimed Shanks, as he jumped up from his chair and dodged out of the giant's grasp.

"Need not be afraid, safe as a feather bed—here, catch this shaver!" he exclaimed, catching up Shorty Junior, and tossing him up on top to his daddy, who grabbed him.

Meanwhile Shanks had summoned some of the waiters and ordered them to put this giant man out, but after the waiters had

been stood on their heads, tied up in knots, slammed over backs of chairs and the floor mopped up with them, they generally expressed a desire to retire to some quiet spot, where giant muscular men were unknown, and die.

It finally cost Shanks ten dollars and a coat to get rid of him.

"This is a pretty how d'ye do—great thunder, who's this?" as a tall skeleton-built man in a pair of skin fitting pants and a seedy black coat buttoned closely, entered, bowed and laying his battered plug hat down, turned a somersault, kicked over the kid and the center-table and came down, smiling and kissing his hand.

"Now zan I sall show to you what I can do ze oder way," and he threw a whole chain of back somersaults, upsetting everything in the room, kicking Shanks under the chin, planting his toe in Shorty's eye and sending the kid flying under the sofa.

Four waiters kindly tumbled him downstairs and our party were left in quiet and peace.

CHAPTER XVII.

"It's no use trying to keep them out, there's a whole lot more of them play-acting fellers up in the room waiting for you," said the waiter, on Shorty, Shanks' and the kid's return from the circus that evening.

"I'm the fat woman from Peru," grinned a big, fat woman, coming bowing forward. "I'm solid fat, none of your flabby kind."

"Wall, yer kin waddle back to Peru, for I'll be hanged 'f yer goin' ter be loafin' roun' dis room, my gazelle."

"They billed me as Kiweuha, the queen of the fat women."

"I don't care a darn if they billed you as a pet seal," said Shanks.

Then she skipped across the floor, knocked all the wind out of Shanks with her fat fists, nearly choked him to death with one of her great fat arms, backed him over an easy chair and was bumping his head against the fire-place, when Shorty and the kid flew to his assistance and by pinching, kicking and sticking pins into her, they managed to get her dragged off, but she at once turned her attention to the others and mumbling:

"I'm a hustler from Peru, and solid fat," she threw the kid across the chandeliers, where he was left shouting and struggling for help and then going with a rush for the astonished Shorty, twisted him around on his toes, lifted him off his feet and laying him across the top of a bureau, spanked him thoroughly.

"Here, blame yer ol' pictur', d'yer tak' me for an infant!" reared Shorty, as he struggled in vain to get down.

"And I'm a seal, and you won't engage me?" she demanded, as she let him go and stood glaring around to see which one of them she should go for bald-headed.

Three more waiters were summoned, but she snatched one by the apron and sat on him, and when the poor man was released he looked as if he had been a postage stamp on a letter, and was just pulled off.

It required the assistance of the landlord and half a dozen more waiters to finally persuade her to depart and leave anything whole in the hotel.

"Wait ze, gentlemen, I haz something for to sho ze, zis is something zay never see outside Paris," exclaimed a thin, bead-eyed Frenchman, bobbing forward and tossing up a half a dozen bright-colored balls, which he caught in rapid succession.

"I iz ze gran' Professor La Tour. I astonishes ze world," said the Frenchman.

"Well yer can astonish yerself rite out of dis room."

"I can keep six balls up in the air and one a flopping on your head at ze same time," persisted the professor, getting out his balls and making preparation to commence business.

"If yer bounce a ball on my head yer'll get bounced out of dis room," exclaimed the kid, indignantly.

"Do yer tak' dis room for a baseball ground?" asked Shorty.

"Because you'll be apt to get a bat alongside of the head if you do," said Shanks.

"Gentlemens, do you mean to say I iz no juggler, that I cannot toss ze balls; why, I haz performed before ze crowned heads," and he fired one ball through the plate glass mirror, shattering it into a thousand pieces, the second ball took Shorty in the back of the neck and sent his chin down on his breast hard enough to make him think he was hit with a cannon ball, Shanks caught the third one in his bread-basket, doubling him up like a pen-knife, and it was fully an hour before he could gasp out "where did that bomb-shell come from?"

The kid rushed to the door, and was screaming frantically for the waiter when the professor took him in the small of the back with a ball, and the next moment that youth was rolling around the carpet, howling blue-blazes, and wanting a place to die in quietly.

By the assistance of all the waiters in the hotel, the room was finally cleared, and our party prepared to retire.

"Well, if dat wasn't der red-hottest ol' racket ever I stuck my nose in, yer kin chalk me down for an apple-dumplin'," said the kid.

"Dey was a queer lot; must hav' heard 'bout yer show," replied his paternal, with a comical smile on his face.

"If that's the kind of folks you have in your profession, the Lord deliver me from it," remarked Shanks.

"I noticed one of dem fellers professioned yer on der nose, wid his toes."

"Yes, I knows it, to my sorrow," coddled Shanks, and he put out the lights and they all turned in.

They were just dozing off when a trembling voice said:

"Gentlemen, I am ze Great Original Snake Charmer, of which I hav' six beautiful specimens wiz me now; I will now show zem to ze."

"Great Moses!" cried Shanks. "Snakes! Snakes!" and he wound the bed-clothes around his head and legs.

"Snakes!" yelled Shorty, making one wild spring in the bed.

"I don't mind sleeping wid mos' anyt'ing, but when it comes to snakes, lem me out," exclaimed the kid, kicking his paternal out on the floor.

"Now, gentlemens, ze performance will open. In ze first place I will let ze six snakes glide around ze room, and after zey has crawled over you, and ze is convinced zey is genuine live snakes, I will call zem to me by names."

"I'll murder you, if I'm hung for it to-morrow, if one of them comes near me," cried Shanks.

"Help! Murder! Fire! Police!" yelled Shorty scrambling back to bed.

"Bounce 'im, for de Lord's sake!" cried the kid, darting out of the door in search of help, and returning a minute later with half a dozen waiters, by whom the snake-charmer and his snakes were bounced, and our party, having locked the door, enjoyed a quiet night's slumber.

After a more than successful week in Paris, during which the kid reaped a rich financial harvest, and our party enjoyed themselves in every way they could, Shorty announced his determination of once more returning to the United States, and all was immediately bustle and confusion, "pack up," being the words.

By quick work and no slow poking, our party were enabled to catch the first steamer out of port, and once more were headed toward their native shore.

"Say," said the kid to Shanks, who was casting up his accounts the morning after their departure, "I s'pect yer tryin' ter find out what's der bottom t'ing in your stomach."

"Get out!" groaned Shanks.

"Cause yer might get some of dese blue-jackets ter crawl down an' find out for yer an' save yer all dis chuckin' up."

"I'll crawl you across the deck with my boot," exclaimed Shanks.

"I guess de only gag yer kin get off, is a gag to Neptune."

Shanks got up and tried to send the kid the whole length of the ship with one kick, but owing to the vessel taking a lurch about that time, he staggered aft and pitched headfirst into the captain's bread-basket, who was giving some orders, and knocked him sprawling on the deck.

"Where in thunder are you going to?" yelled the captain, as he batted him over the head with his speaking trumpet.

"How do I know?" cried Shanks, as he tried to scramble to his feet.

"What brought you here?"

"Darned if I know."

"Well, I'll teach you!" exclaimed the captain, as he shook him.

By the timely interference of Shorty, who was an amused spectator of the whole scene, Shanks was rescued from the clutches of the captain, and matters explained.

A pleasant voyage brought them safely to New York, where they were met by a host of their old admirers.

"Will yer giv' der boys a farewell benefit?" asked Shorty.

"Yes, I t'ink I'll giv' dem one show, for de sake of ol' times," replied the kid.

The show was a grand success, the house was crowded with an eager, delighted audience, and everything passed off charmingly. New York boys shouted their approbation, and testified their delight at Shorty Junior's return.

Buster behaved magnificently, as if the ocean trip had done him good, the mules acted more wickedly than ever, and altogether, it was a gala night, and Shorty Junior and the Yankee Boy's Circus retired in a blaze of glory.

THE END.

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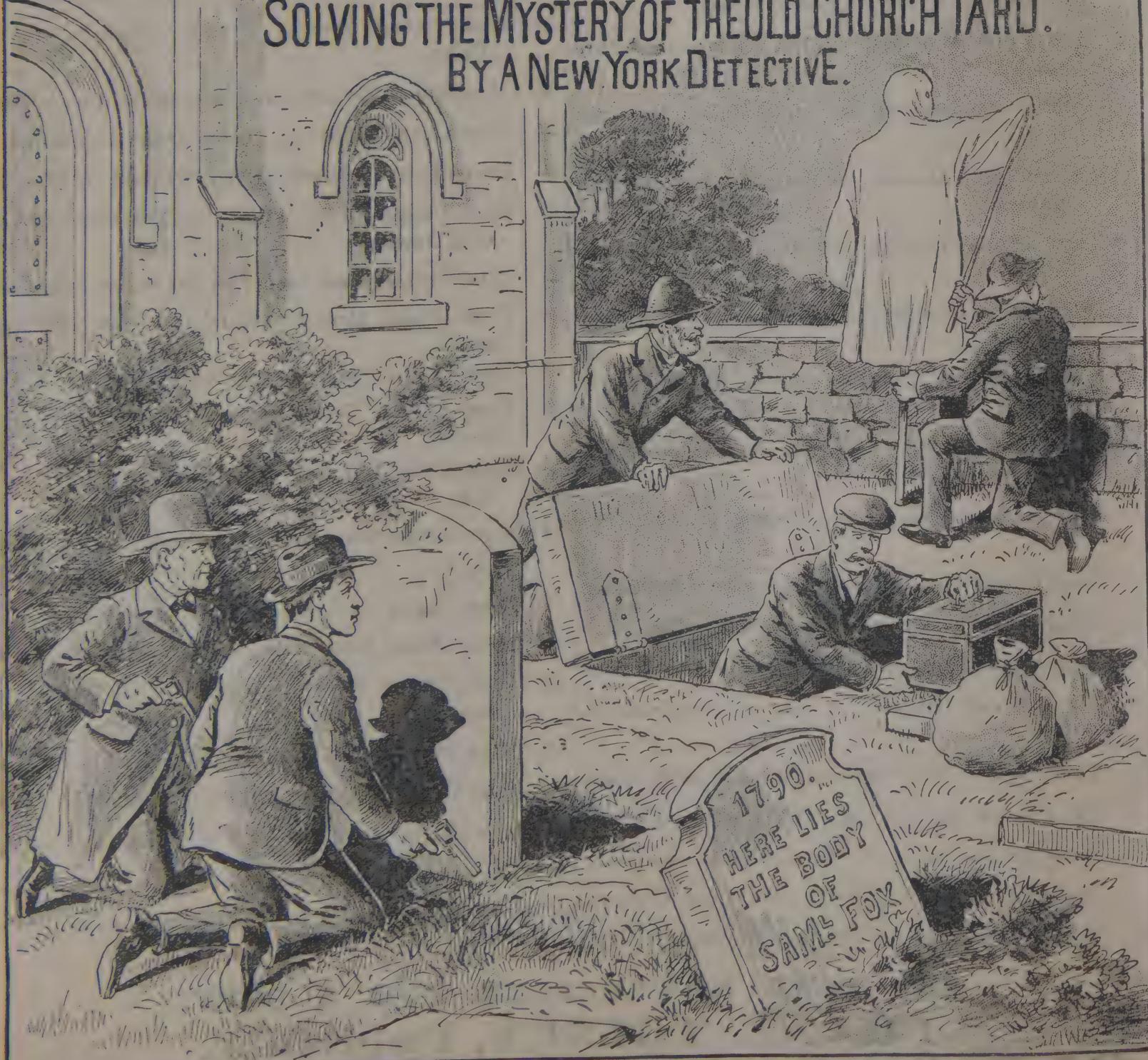
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